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JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE  
JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL

SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPING JOINT LEADERS

by

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Major, USAF

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

13 May 2005

### **About the Author**

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## **Abstract**

In the future, the US military cannot afford to be outmaneuvered by the enemy anywhere within the battlespace; freedom depends on our ability to retain the initiative and to subdue or annihilate the enemy at points of our choosing. Toward that end, we must continue to exploit fully joint warfighting theory and doctrine. We do this well enough in most areas, with the glaring exception of officer professional development. This research attempts to show that the Services do nothing substantial or systematic to instill joint-mindedness among all officers—the junior ranks most especially. This thesis ventures to illustrate that “joint” is a mere credential an officer attains at random points throughout his career. In doing so, Service core competencies and qualifications are established at the expense of joint mindedness and ultimately the joint force. The author provides analysis of each Service starting at the tactical career level and then proceeding on to the operational career level. The research culminates with an analysis of the strategic career level. Within these three career levels the author evaluates education (technical and professional military education), assignments, and exercises and operations. Finally, for each career level he provides his assessment and way ahead for the Services.

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## Scenario

*The year is 2030 and the US has been at war since 2001 when attacks by Islamic extremists challenged freedom and democracy. First the US fought in Afghanistan, then Iraq, and then literally around the world with its Global War on Terrorism. The men and women of the US Armed Services have fought valiantly and intelligently like they have in years past but things have changed. By the year 2030, technology has changed dramatically. Manned flight by any of the Services is limited to just a few command and control aircraft along with some strike aircraft and helicopters remaining from the turn of the century. Naval and Marine Corps ships and submarines have become much more capable, but as a result the fleet has been cut substantially since 2005. The Army has a particularly light force of highly trained soldiers where virtual warfare technology is predominant. In years preceding 2030, America's enemies have not been large fielded forces but rather ones that challenged her ideological values by direct and indirect attacks on her people abroad and at home. This not only forced the US to become a much more intellectual joint force but one that still needed to hold on to key core competencies of warfare because of matured threats like China and Iran. Initially, the enemy mentally outmaneuvered American military leadership by always staying one step ahead. However, what had changed in the years leading up to 2030 was the "joint mindedness" of the leaders. They had grown up and developed in a military environment where service competencies were still imperative but their understanding of each other's Service was extensively superior. They knew how to leverage capability, employ both kinetic and non-kinetic firepower, and they inherently understood how to do this together, as one cohesive joint team.*



## **Introduction**

A problem in today's military is that collectively more is not being done to develop joint mindedness within our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines. What this problem lends itself to is leaders who do not thoroughly understanding another Service's view of the battlespace. The solution to this problem is that joint mindedness must be systematically installed throughout an officer's career. The thesis of this research is that the increasing complexity and importance of joint warfare demands that joint officer development start at the beginning of an officer's career and be systematically installed at appropriate intervals.

The research aims to identify what is being done now within the Services regarding joint acculturation throughout an officer's career. As described by Representative Skelton, on page 64 of the "Skelton Committee Report" joint acculturation as achieved in education is:

“the mutual understanding and rapport that develop when students from all services study in mixed seminars and share ideas, values, and traditions of their services, when then solve joint problems together, and when preconceived notions about the nature of and solution to problems of warfare, learned during service training and education, are challenged daily.”

The scope of the research is such that it would not be unfeasible to address every career field in every Service. The particular focus of this research is to highlight the underlying problem that joint mindedness is not instituted at an early enough point in an officer's career. Joint mindedness must be instituted early and often if the US military is to have high-quality future joint leaders. As the 2003 Joint Operations Concept says now, “People remain the centerpiece of successful joint operations. Although the capabilities associated with the tools of warfare will change, the dynamics of human interactions and will, instilled through innovative

leadership, will remain the driving force in all military operations” (Joint Operations Concepts, 2003, 5). As the initial scenario alluded to, technology may change but the requirement for great leaders who know how to exploit fully the forces under their command will always be there.

Though there are examples of success today, there are also problems with joint leadership and it would not be realistic to think all these problems could be solved immediately. One of the larger problems, and one this research will attempt to identify, is that each Service develops, grows, and promotes those who show the best future potential. These are officers who the Services identify as being “their” leaders in the future. Therefore, these officers are kept within their Services and placed in key leadership positions throughout their careers. What this creates is an officer who is very skilled in the eyes of his Service but because of leadership requirements does not venture out in the joint force. Nevertheless, as a successful officer progresses through his career by getting promoted through his Service, he will eventually come to a point where he will step into a joint command to lead a joint force. It is at this point, that without compromise, the officer must be well versed in joint force knowledge and application. Although, if this officer has been required to remain in his Service to continue to be competitive, then his joint mindedness will not be at the level necessary to be an effective joint leader. This research will show this problem is present with all Services, and must be addressed if we are to have the officers in the future we need to successfully lead the joint force.

The US Armed Forces have exceptionally able senior military leaders. Their leadership in recent conflicts such as Operations ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) and IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) has displayed this. Names that immediately surface are people such as General Tommy Franks, who as Commander of United States Central Command, led all coalition forces and General David McKiernan who was the Combined Forces Land Component Commander. The

US Air Force has two first-class examples of senior level Air Force leaders in the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers, and the Combined Forces Air Component Commander (CFACC) for OIF, then Lieutenant General T. Michael “Buzz” Moseley. Lieutenant General James Conway successfully led I Marine Expeditionary Forces, while Admiral Timothy J. Keating was the Joint Forces Maritime Commander.

Each of these men had different career paths, but yet each was put into positions of incredible joint leadership and joint responsibility. These men performed exceptionally well, and probably would have, regardless of their career progression. However, since the joint force can not expect to have officers like these men, joint mindedness must be inculcated at the onset a career. Joint mindedness, being the ability for an officer to fully comprehend their sister Services, is not ingrained early enough in an officer’s career.

General Tommy Franks started off his career as an Artilleryman in Vietnam, primarily working with the Army but also working joint strikes by calling in fixed wing Air Force assets. His other assignments included a tour in Germany as a captain, where the preponderance of his experience was working with the Army as an Assistant S-3 and then commander of a Howitzer battery. As a major, he served his first joint tour as a Staff Officer for the Congressional Actions Team. After that, it was back to Germany as a battalion commander. General Franks then came back stateside to Fort Hood as the Commander of Division Artillery and then Assistant Division Commander, where he deployed for Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. Was it here in combat in southwest Asia where he learned how to be a great joint leader? By this point in General Franks’ career he was already a brigadier general so it is doubtful. This had been developed over his professional career as an officer.

Following his assignment at Fort Hood, he went on to Korea, then to the Third US Army, and finally, duty as Commander, US Central Command. Yet despite what would seem to be limited exposure to joint forces, he successfully led joint-coalition operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Was it his assignment in Vietnam almost 30 years earlier that provided him the recipe for success? Or was it perhaps his innate ability to lead troops, make the right decisions in dynamic situations, and motivate those subordinate to him? What is important with the General Franks example is probably equally true with flag and general officers in the other Services. The Armed Services cannot afford to hope that an officer successfully develops into an effective joint senior leader much like General Franks. A senior leader, and more specifically, a senior joint leader, needs to be groomed from the start of an officer's career and be entrenched in joint mindedness.

The senior generals involved in Afghanistan and Iraq came from different service varied backgrounds but they all shared a mutual characteristic:

“a commitment to the study of their profession and a desire to understand the nature and character of human conflict. This new era of warfare demands much more of a combatant. Constant deployments and the pressures of practical service might in time diminish opportunities for our young leaders to study and reflect on their profession. The same intellectual qualities that marked the commanders in this war must be passed on to future generations of the American military” (Murray, 2003, 251).

Murray concludes by saying the wars we are fighting now and will fight in the future require a phenomenal amount from our officers. This new era of warfare and its imminent challenges necessitate officers who possess an innate joint mindedness. Currently there is no clear career path for officers to get there.

Services must more carefully develop strategic, tactical level, and “joint operational level, leaders capable of synergistically combining the emerging capabilities in time, space, and purpose to accomplish the operational or strategic objectives. Joint operational leaders must fully understand the operations strategy.” Therefore, “the development of leaders grounded in both the art and science of joint operations must begin very early in the military education process” (OSD, 2003, 25). The military education process is just one aspect of an officer’s career that should sharply focus on joint mindedness.

There is an education instruction in place, The Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP). The “instruction outlines the policies and procedures necessary to fulfill CJCS PME responsibilities” (CJCSI 1800.01B, 2004, 2). Within the OPMEP exists a continuum “ that structures the development of Service and joint officers by organizing the continuum into five military educational levels, pre-commissioning, primary, intermediate, senior, and G/FO.” What this instruction does is to define “the focus of each educational level in terms of the major levels of war...and links the educational levels so each builds upon the knowledge and values gained in previous levels” (CJCSI 1800.01B, 2004, A-A-1). However, the OPMEP is merely one policy that affects an officer’s career development only through formal joint education.

In addition to education, other areas which impact an officer’s joint mindedness are Service education, assignments, exercises, and operations. Officer assignments need to meet Services requirements, but the needs of the joint force must also be considered. Likewise, there are exercises within the Services that are joint. But, do they really prepare officers for the challenges of joint warfare? It is argued that they do not introduce enough jointness to the officer. Each Service is involved in operations worldwide. These experiences, as this research

will show, are invaluable to instituting joint mindedness. Nevertheless, operations are just one aspect of an officer's career.

To varying degrees, as this research will show, Services are implementing jointness. However, for all four Services there is a better way to develop an officer and this research will help to show how those joint needs must be met.

For the purposes of this research, an officer's career is divided into three main categories: education (formal and technical), assignments (staff and operational), and exercises and operations. These descriptors allow any process, schooling, exercise, or individual experience to fall within a category. The categories will then be applied to each Service in a respective phase in an officer's career starting with the tactical career level, progressing through the operational career level, eventually ending at the strategic career level. These intervals are typically applied to levels of warfare, but for simplicity in this research, they are to be applied to the different intervals or career levels in an officer's career. Lastly, they are used because these four elements cover the breadth of a military career, and with an appropriate balance an officer, should have the right tools to becoming a successful joint leader.

During the course of this research, students from the first-ever Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) were asked to fill out a questionnaire. This questionnaire specifically dealt with the four areas mentioned and asked the participants whether or not they had joint experience, to what extent, and also whether it was beneficial to them. While this data did not provide statistically significant data, it does provide a useful perspective of these categories.

The tactical career level represents the years between an officer's commissioning date as an O-1 and when they become an O-4. The operational career level describes an officer's career

between the grades of O-4 up to O-6. Lastly, the strategic career level describes O-6 up through O-10.

## **Analysis**

### **Tactical Career Level**

For any Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine officer to be successful as a leader in the joint arena, it is vitally important for them to be well rooted in their primary specialty. This is a very common theme amongst all service members. The question is how does someone maintain critical Service competencies while getting the requisite education and much needed exposure to the other Services? The officer must maintain their service competencies and joint mindedness through a systematically installed process which takes an officer from the beginning of their careers to the end.

For the cadet or midshipman in their pre-commissioning source, the OPMEP directs that “the curricula are oriented toward providing candidates with a basic grounding in the US defense establishment and their chosen Military Service, as well as a foundation in leadership, management, ethics and other subjects...” The commissioned officer now in the rank of O-1 through O-3 is where “Primary education focuses on preparing junior officers to serve in their assigned branch or warfare or staff specialty.” It is within this Primary Education the tactical level of warfare is addressed. Further, “Service schools...will foster an understanding of joint warfighting necessary for success at this [Tactical] level” (CJCSI 1800.01B, 2004, A-A-2, 3). This is not a significant effort as service competencies should be and are still the priority. The larger problem is, that the minimal level of formal joint training is not uniformly met, as the emphasis is placed entirely on the Service.

This research will start with the Army officer at the tactical career level by discussing the four target areas and proceed to the tactical career levels of Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps officers. The research analysis will then go on to the operational career level of an officer where



each service and focus will be discussed. Lastly, the strategic career level of an officer will be covered.

## **Army**

### **Tactical Career Level**

Developing leaders has been a major goal for the Army since their early days; hence just one of the many reasons the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York was created. The Army has developed the most formal system to develop officers and has consistently produced highly proficient leaders. The Army leader development model “is depicted by three pillars: institutional (formal) education, operational assignments, and self development initiatives” (McGuire, 2001/2002, 91). These pillars provide an adequate guide for officer development in any Service, however, the Army uses these pillars to “prescribe a career long, progressive, sequential, and interconnected process” (McGuire, 2001/2002, 91-92). After careful examination of the words taken from Colonel McGuire’s article in the JFQ, there is little room for the Army officer to expect a chance to serve in a joint assignment early in his career. Almost like a medication prescribed by a doctor to a patient, the Army officer’s career is prescribed to them from his very early days as a second Lieutenant.

Is the model the Army uses for their officers one which sets them up for success as a joint leader later in their careers? This research will indicate in many cases, it is not. However, one could say it worked for General Franks and General McKiernan but this may not always be the case. In an article titled “*Information, Knowledge, and Wisdom: Leader Development Implications for The Army After Next*,” there is the discussion and controversy over whether the Army is building the right leaders for tomorrow’s Army. In more specific terms the, “leader decisions made at the tactical level now may have direct consequences at the strategic level”

(Bergner, 2000, 7). This is why it is important that when thinking about successfully developing future Army leaders, the tactical career level must be discussed and examined. These Army officers who are at the initial points in their careers now will be the joint strategic leaders of tomorrow. The following analysis of the Army tactical interval will show stubborn rigidity when it comes to Army officers getting tactical career level joint mindedness.

### **Education**

Prior to arriving on active duty an Army officer candidate attends one of three pre-commissioning sources: Reserve Officers Training Corps, Officer Candidate School, or the United States Military Academy. Pre-commissioning training qualifies individuals to serve as officers. The purpose of pre-commissioning training “is to educate and train cadets/officer candidates, assess their readiness and potential for commissioning as second lieutenants and prepare them for progression and continuing development” (HQ/USA, 1998, 3-4).

Currently, upon commissioning, an Army officer in one of the four combat arms branches will go to his respective Officer Basic Course (OBC). The OBCs “are branch specific qualification courses which provide newly commissioned officers an opportunity to acquire the attributes and skills required to lead platoon sized units” (HQ/USA, 1998, 4). For example, Infantrymen proceed to Fort Benning, Georgia, an Aviation officer to Fort Rucker, Alabama, an Armor officer to Fort Knox, Kentucky, and an Artilleryman to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. After OBC, an officer completes his technical training and is awarded his additional skill identifier. Once complete, with the technical school such as aviation training or Ranger school, he then proceeds to his first operational assignment.

After an Army officer is at his first assignment for three to four years he will have a chance to pursue the Captains Career Course (CCC). The CCC provides the Army Captain with

“18-weeks of advanced branch specific technical and tactical training with integrated common core instruction. This provides company grade officers an opportunity to acquire the attributes and skills required to lead company-sized units and serve on battalion and brigade staffs” (HQ/USA, 1998, 10). None of the nine areas of instruction this CCC provides are joint related. The goal is Army specific training and guidance. Upon completion of CCC an Army officer will then return to an operational unit where he will pursue an opportunity to command at company level.

### **Assignments**

An Army officer's career is generally a series of two and three year assignments, each one preparing them for the next. Personal abilities and preferences may affect the choices an Army officer makes. However, like most Services it comes down to the needs of the Army.

An operational assignment is where an Army officer gains experience. This experience is “gained through on-the-job training in a variety of challenging assignments and additional duties and prepares officers to lead and train soldiers, both in the field and in garrison” (HQ/USA, 1998, 3). These experiences will ultimately shape an Army officer’s perspective as they advance in their careers. Undoubtedly, joint assignments would have the same affect on the officer.

Within the confines of these first operational assignments, an officer may receive mentorship from his first line supervisor or his commander. This mentoring process and “developing subordinate leaders is a professional responsibility which must be carried-out to ensure the future leadership of the Army” (HQ/USA, 1998, 3). Although mentorship is just briefly mentioned here, this should not take away from its importance especially at an early point in an officer’s career. It is during these sessions, that the need for an officer to have joint mindedness must be discussed.

Another factor in the development of Army officers that has come into greater importance over the past several years is that of stability. The Chief of Staff of the United States Army is looking to create stability. This stability will be created by the officers' first two operational assignment at his first duty station which is separated by the officer's advanced course. Officers do have an opportunity to go to another branches' CCC which is important in developing the Army officer's understanding of Service competencies. This choice of CCC is made by the officer through his branch.

Between an officer's initial training and first assignment, the first duty station may account for an average of eight years. This is roughly eight years of purely focusing on Service specialties and learning to become a member of the combined arms team. This is spelled out as "all officers must focus their company grade years on branch qualification, regardless of the functional area and Career Field they will later enter" (HQ/USA, 1998, 10).

Once an Army officer has received his branch qualification "between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> years of service, a number of options become available for the continued career development" (HQ/USA, 1998, 10). None of these options for the officer at the tactical career level develop joint expertise. The areas available to an Army officer to expand his their horizons are "branch assignments, branch/functional area generalist assignments, functional area development, Advanced Civil Schooling, Training With Industry, or Army Acquisition Corps" (HQ/USA, 1998, 11). Nowhere in this tactical career level assignment guidance is jointness made a priority.

Major Bill Ryan, a decorated USMA graduate who served as a company commander, summarized the assignment portion of the tactical career level by saying, "Overall, it is about learning your job and how to lead troops. It is about being branch qualified by being a company commander and more often than not, if an Army officer does not branch qualify as a Captain,

they will not get promoted to Major and move on to the next operational stage in his career. In my opinion, this branch qualification as a company commander is the officer's first stage to being a future joint leader because if you don't get branch qualified you don't get promoted, and if you don't get promoted you obviously have no chance of advancing in the Army. However, bear in mind there is absolutely no opportunity to go joint until someone has roughly reached the fifteen year mark in his career" (Personal Interview, MAJ W. Ryan, 2004/5). As can be seen, initial branch qualification for the Army officer is critical for career progression but there must be a better way to include a joint assignment earlier in an officer's career.

So from an Army perspective, the most important aspect of a tactical career level assignment is not a joint position, but rather experience as a company commander. As a company commander an officer can be in charge of over 100 soldiers. This experience will serve as a valuable resource throughout an Army officer's career as his command opportunities increase in responsibility.

### **Exercises and Operations**

Exercises provide a soldier an opportunity to implement his best judgment based on the education and experience received up until that point. In a 1998 Industrial College of the Armed Forces study titled "*What Do Senior Leaders Say About Strategic Leader Development?*" the author's research led to a great point. He states "the common agreement is that strategic leader development requires a stimulus that challenges the leader's capacity to rethink and reorganize frameworks in solving increasingly more complex problems in an increasingly ambiguous and uncertain environment" (McGuire, 1998, 25). Exercises, at all levels, have the ability to provide that stimulus and make the officer rethink his critical decisions so when he launches into an

operation he is prepared. However, it is crucial that these exercises contribute to joint mindedness.

For the Army, exercises involve all three career levels of an officer. The Army believes “exercises also provide practice for the performance of supporting critical leader and soldier individual tasks and under the most realistic simulated battle conditions” (GlobalSecurity.org, Army Exercises, 2002, 1). Exercises for a junior Army officer provide valuable experience in their respective fields while exposing them to other branches of intraservice operations and support functions. Exercises in the Army take place across the Service, but a few key locations have large facilities to prepare for all phases of an operation. They are the Combat Training Centers at Fort Polk, Louisiana, Fort Irwin, California, and Hohenfels, Germany. The primary goal of these centers “is to provide training for brigade level combat team and below” (Personal Interview--MAJ W. Ryan, 2005).

Another perspective comes from a two-conflict Army officer of twenty years. He articulates that exercises “allow Army officers and soldiers the opportunity to hone their skills while seeing how they integrate into the larger Army. Inherently Army exercises are not all joint because their focus is on the different branches of the Army exercising together” (Personal Interview, LTC W. Dolan, 2005). These Army exercises then must be integrated with sister Services to become more joint to benefit the Army officer beyond mastery of Service competencies.

Exercises across the Army help to prepare the main body of the Army to participate in the two current ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, there are other operations that focus specifically on training in countries like the Philippines, Columbia, and Combined

Task Force Horn of Africa. The specific training operations are currently supported by Special Forces troops.

Participation in OEF, OIF, or similar operations will help structure the way an Army officer formulates his command style and also his views of what is important in the joint environment. In this day and age, joint exposure is inevitable at tactical level operations as in Afghanistan “there are approximately 18,000 U.S. military personnel in and around the country” (Feickert, 2005, CRS-2). Infantry officers who are veterans of OEF said “an attached Joint Tactical Air Control (JTAC) team and Air Liaison Officers (ALO) provided the planning and integration of Close Air Support (CAS) and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Daily (ISR) daily” (Personal Interview LTC C. Glenn). Other soldiers working with “U.S. Special Forces are primarily concerned with capturing or killing Taliban and Al Qaeda leaders” (Feickert, 2005, CRS-2).

Army officers not participating in OEF will more than likely get a chance to be a part of OIF as the numbers of troops soar to record levels. In fact when the elections were held in Iraq this past January it was stated that “troop strength is expected to increase to about 160,000” (Bowman, 2004, 1). Although this means more time away from families, it also means more officers have an opportunity to get valuable experience from an ongoing joint operation.

An Army Infantry officer who participated in OIF mentioned “I personally sought opportunities to work in a joint environment. This proved indispensable because during OIF because I was confident in my abilities to synchronize operations with joint forces. The thing is, I was only one of a very few senior field grade officers who had this experience. I understood the capabilities and requirements of the forces we were working with and could leverage them for total force efficiency. Furthermore, knowledge derived from working joint issues was handy

when dealing with coalition and interagency challenges”. He then goes on to say “one of my biggest challenges initially was educating the soldiers on joint interoperability. Since our STRYKER was fairly new we were just concerned with training and operating within the Army structure and dealt less with the joint elements. If I were a brigade commander and had to do OIF or an operation of similar magnitude all over again I would undoubtedly seek more joint exercises for all my soldiers but specifically those geared towards challenges for my company and battalion commanders” (Personal Interview, LTC R. Choppa, 2005). It is noteworthy that battalion and deputy brigade commanders are looking for joint training opportunities but more must be done. Joint exercise interoperability must occur at higher levels where changes to the current system can be implemented.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

It is evident that within the tactical career level of an Army officer’s profession that specific qualifications must be met, such as branch qualifying as a company commander. These qualifications are necessary for mastery of the Army core competencies as well as advancement. Therefore, since the tactical stage of an Army officer’s career facilitates little room for joint assignments, then experience in joint operations and joint exercises is essential to acculturation and joint mindedness. As Jeffrey D. McCausland states in his article on *Transforming Strategic Leader Education for the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Army*, “...such missions provide excellent opportunities for the experiential development of our officer corps. Junior officers who have served in recent operations...have achieved a wealth of experience in joint, combined, and interagency operations far exceeding...most lieutenants and captains during the Cold War” (McCausland, 2001, 7). Sister Service acculturation can also be partially achieved through Service reading programs.



Although an officer may not have a significant understanding of his sister Services, reading will help to enlighten him.

## **Navy**

### **Tactical Career Level**

Out of all the Services researched, the Navy leader and officer development model provides the least opportunity for joint mindedness due to Service demands. The Navy leader development “represents a career-long continuum from recruitment to retirement.” As could be expected with naval officers, there is a need to become proficient and gain operational experience on their ships, aircraft, or submarines. These operational experiences will shape them, and “coupled with formal institutional education” will ensure they are “technically and tactically trained and educated on the specific system, aircraft, or ship.” The basis for this strategic naval leader and potentially joint force leader is a “reinforcement of Service leadership fundamentals and decision-making processes” (McGuire, 2001/2, 92).

The challenges one will see with naval officer career progression in regards to joint mindedness are similar to the challenges the Army officer faces. The first opportunity a Naval officer generally has to expand his leadership foundation and pursue a job when he receives joint credit is between the ten and thirteen year mark (Sparks, 2004, 1). This is due to the required gates the naval officer has to meet if he is to be competitive within the Navy. This predicament is the same for aviators, Surface Warfare Officers (SWO), or submariners. These Service requirements are too binding for officers to gain joint mindedness. Officers must be able to broaden their career without being penalized for expanding and shaping their perspective.

## **Education**

Growth of the Naval officer begins at one of three commissioning sources--United States Naval Academy, Officer Candidate School, or the Reserve Officer Training Corps. Up until recently these sources of commission have been Navy-specific and delved only superficially into jointness. At least for the ROTC aspect of the Navy commissioning source, this is about to change at the University of South Florida (USF). In fact the "Joint Military Science Leadership Center, aims to train future Armed Forces officers to value, operate, and conduct successful operations across unit, agency, and even international lines." The center stood up in fall 2004 and "will start with seminars on joint operations as early as November 2004" (Solocheck, 2004, 2). USF has a Navy detachment, as well as, an Army and Air Force one which means all four Services are covered. Should USF's center be a success, universities across the nation could possibly start receiving additional federal appropriations. This is a smart decision to initiate this program with ROTC because the Service academies only account for "18 percent of the officer corps" (Solocheck, 2004, 2). USF is a good start, but the Services should make every effort to enhance their traditional Service centric programs at all universities to include jointness. The benefits of this joint center would far outweigh the costs to make the initial changes.

Once a Naval midshipman is commissioned, the new Ensign selects a career track. For example, an Ensign selected to be a Naval Flight Officer (NFO) will go through aviation training and gains a specific skill set. In the example of Navy E-2 NFOs, the training track is almost two years and includes training for survival, controller, and flight operations. This extensive system and Naval training prepares the NFO for his next assignment in his fleet squadron.

## **Assignments**

A Naval aviation officer can expect to spend three years in his first fleet squadron. This first fleet squadron, as described by a NFO of 22 years, will “indoctrinate you to Navy ideals, traditions, and of course the intricacies associated with sea duty” (Personal interview, CDR S. Miller, 2005).

Upon completion of the Naval officer’s first fleet assignment, an initial career decision may need to be made. The next assignment may guide the officer in most cases either down the competitive road or what some perceive in the Navy as the non-competitive career track. For example, in the case of a Naval aviation officer who performs well during his first fleet tour he will generally be steered in the direction of going back to his service specialty training squadron or unit. As another example shows, an E-2C NFO who shined amongst his peers and was the number one or number two junior officer in the squadron will go to either the east coast or west coast weapons school. This weapons school will provide the aspiring NFO with an opportunity to maintain and improve his skill set while teaching younger officers about his newly acquired trade. In other words, it is an opportunity for a second tour officer to further his instructor skills and gain experience leading while in a shore-based duty assignment. The weapons school needs good officers, but officers like this would also benefit from an assignment outside of their platform. An assignment with Air Force AWACS unit would not only benefit the officer but also benefit the Air Force.

As an alternative, should the competitive Navy officer elect to not go back to his training unit he could pursue an opportunity to go to school at Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, California, a civilian degree program, a recruiting/training program, or to an aide job. In the case of NPS, “It is not that NPS will make the officer non-competitive for command in the

future, it's just that the Navy hasn't bought into the whole school for promotion business. When it comes right down to it, it is the whole person concept and there are people who go to school who are sharp and will be commanders someday along with those who went to his training units who are not so sharp. In most cases it is personal preference which is why an officer who wants to stay competitive for command chooses his respective training school houses or weapons school or NPS" (Personal Interview, CDR S. Miller, 2005).

After the young officer completes his first shore duty, he will typically have eight years of service as an officer in the Navy. It is now time for the officer to head back out to sea and return to a fleet assignment. This opportunity to return to the fleet is Navy specific and may not entail joint opportunities but should. If the officer filled a shore duty that was Navy centric then duty with a sister Service would fit perfectly here.

Nonetheless, should an officer return to the fleet and assume responsibilities outside of his fleet squadron he could expect duties on the Air Wing or Battle Group Staff. If the opportunity does present itself where an officer spends time on the staff, there is a very small opportunity the officer could be pulled off of the staff to assume shore duties while his carrier strike group is at sea. These duties could be something like Navy Liaison Officer at a Combined or Joint Air Operations Center. Although this shore based duty is for a short period of time, it does expose the Navy-centric officer to other Services such as the Air Force. However, this opportunity is limited. This "is not unheard for only three JOs (junior officers) to get the opportunity to go ashore while we are at sea" (Personal Interview, CDR S. Miller, 2005). This opportunity does not grant joint credit per se but does expose officers to the larger picture of operations in something like a Joint Task Force residing at a Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC).

## **Exercises and Operations**

Exercises in the Navy are prevalent in all of the operational branches. In fact, “the Navy participates in about 175 unit exercises annually. Ninety percent of these exercises involved operations with other U.S. or multinational forces” (<http://globalsecurity.org/military/ops/ex-navy.htm> July 2004, GlobalSecurity.org, Navy Exercises, 2004, 1). For SWOs, aviators, and submariners, they are all part of a normal routine prior to departing for a six-month deployment. The numbers may reflect ninety percent but that is not always one hundred percent quality. As described by CDR Steve Miller, the former Executive Officer and then Commanding Officer of VAW-123, “opportunities to participate in joint exercises are getting better but are not where they need to be synchronized as joint force in theater. Even just one high quality joint exercise practicing today’s tactics, techniques, and procedures with the right participants would help to eliminate the sometimes two to three week long growing pains in theater.”

The first exercise a Carrier Strike Group (CSG) can expect to participate in as it began its fleet preparation is a Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX). This COMPTUEX “is normally conducted during a two to three week period six to eight weeks before JTFEX” (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy Exercises, 2004, 1). It allows CSG leadership an opportunity to practice maneuver leadership at sea while exercising such activities as fleet defense and digital communications, and data between the ships and submarines. Furthermore, it is “focused on developing the carrier/air wing team into a cohesive unit, if additional battle group (BG) assets are available, integrating these units into the associated deploying BG” (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy COMPTUEX, 2004, 1).

The fleet exercise takes on an air emphasis when the Carrier Air Wing (CVW) or CAG as it is commonly referred to goes to Fallon Naval Air Station, Nevada for air training exercise. Fallon is an excellent opportunity for fleet aviators to come together from across the Navy and work together. Getting to know each other prior to deploying out sea consequently makes the CVW an effective fighting force the moment they depart port.

The culmination of the spin-up for a CSG is an exercise called Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX) which tests their training and preparation. JTFEX is a staff exercise for the specific purpose of practicing and exercising command and control. This exercise covers all three levels of a Naval officer's career and normally "consists of a nominal 21 days underway prior to deployment" (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy JTFEX, 2004, 1). One perspective from a Naval officer was "sometimes the only platform or command and control element of the JTFEX is the typical AWACS [Airborne Warning and Control System] that comes to participate. We very seldom get a large amount of participation from AF or Marine fighter assets, tankers, or other heavy platforms we may be expected to work with" (Personal Interview, CDR R. Cepek, 2005).

The Navy participates in a multitude of exercises and for good reason. It is because anywhere in the world an operation is taking place the United States Navy is typically present conducting maneuvers. Most recently there has been Operation ALLIED FORCE (OAF), OEF, and OIF. The Naval presence in all those operations was significant; during OIF, at the height of the operation there were five carrier strike groups participating. Although these operations provide the naval officer exposure to other Services, this still poses a challenge for the Naval officer trying to get face-to-face joint experience. Usually the officer's exposure is limited to communication over the radio or through e-mail. This is tolerable but much greater exposure,

particularly through face-to-face interaction, is needed to fully contribute to an officer's joint mindedness.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

Overall, leader and officer development within the Navy at the tactical career level is insufficiently joint in its character. Exercises offer a chance for joint exposure although as depicted through this research, the word joint in front of exercises may not provide a solid indoctrination to the other Services. Operationally speaking, naval officers do acquire some introduction to the other Services. This is the situation since the officer works with the Marines and Air Force during deployments, but overall lack the face-to-face exposure necessary to truly understand the joint involvement in operations and gain further gain a joint mindedness.

These challenges could be alleviated by assignments with their sister Services earlier in their careers, specifically after their first assignment in the fleet. Should this opportunity not present itself and the officer is required to complete a Navy shore duty, then it is following this assignment the officer needs to seek joint. Should these opportunities still not be able to the officer they must then seek every opportunity to come ashore while at sea. In addition, Navy officers must pursue professional education though the reading of selected works within their sister Service.

## **Air Force**

### **Tactical Career Level**

*“Leadership is the art and science of influencing and directing people to accomplish the assigned mission.”*  
AFDD 1-1

The Air Force uses the term Force Development in its doctrine when it refers to varying levels of an officers’ growth. A brief given by Brigadier General Rich Hassan of the United States Air Force Senior Leader Management Office describes Tactical Level Development as “gaining knowledge and experience in primary skill, combined with educational and leadership training experiences” (Hassan, 2004, 7). It is gaining this valuable knowledge, coupled with the right experiences, which will ultimately make an Air Force officer into an excellent joint senior leader. At the tactical career level this means service competencies more so than jointness.

The model the AF has developed to help guide AF leaders through their careers is spelled out in Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1. Within AFDD 1-1, these levels are part of Leadership Competencies. This Air Force model applies the same stages described thoroughly in this research. However, what is different is “each of the three leadership levels within the Air Force is distinct from but related to the levels of warfare...” (AFDD 1-1, 2004, 8). The level of leadership described in this research correlate to rank, because rank can transcend multiple levels of warfare. For example, if someone is an Air Force major general, they may be responsible for a Joint Task Force that resides at the Operational level of warfare in their leading of tactical level actions.

The first career level to be described in the USAF’s Leadership Development model is the tactical level. “At the tactical, or the personal/direct level, Air Force members master their primary duty skills...tactical leaders are the Air Force’s technicians and specialists. At the



tactical career level, Airmen learn about themselves as leaders”. Examples of this in the officer corps is weapons controlling for the air battle manager, proficiency in basic fighting maneuvers or air combat training for a fighter pilot, or effective pre-mission briefings and debriefings for an intelligence officer. These are all core skills an officer needs and will continue to build on. Therefore, “combined with educational and leadership training exercises” (USAF Leadership Flightplan, 2005, 1). These skills will help to prepare the officer until they make the transition to the next level of his career, the operational career level, which will be talked about in the next section of this research.

Since each Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) is responsible for Airmen in their respective career fields, there typically exists a model an officer can use to guide them through his career. This model by no means guarantees the Air Force officer will get the necessary joint acculturation and exposure to provide them the joint mindedness. In fact, on the officer’s pyramid representing his career, there is merely the word “joint”. Therefore, unless the officer adamantly pursues a joint assignment it can be thwarted by the personnel system, and thus not occurring until much later in his career.

### **Education**

The Air Force within the past two years has changed its education process from professional military education to a Developmental Educational (DE) process. DE expands to “include not only traditional PME, but also advanced academic degree (AAD) programs, fellowships, and specialty schools”. Developmental Education consists of three levels: basic, intermediate, and senior. The basic level or BDE consists of “DE received at the Tactical level. Intermediate or IDE is DE received at the Operational level. DE received near or at the senior officer ranks is SDE” (CSAF Sight Picture, 2002, 1).

In years past an Air Force officer would start out his career at a basic technical school which awards his Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) such as 13B for Air Battle Manager (ABM). This technical school was typically the Air Force officer's first introduction to the Air Force and thus initiated at the tactical career level. What this created was a mindset where Air Force officers thought of themselves as pilots, navigators, ABMs, maintenance officers, and intelligence officers first instead of second lieutenants. The Air Force shifted their focus in the development of officers in 1998 when they stood up the Air and Space Basic Course. Eventually it was re-designated the Air and Space Basic Course or ASBC as it is commonly referred to by lieutenants. "The Aerospace Basic Course was created to unify new officer accessions from diverse commissioning sources: Reserve Officer Training Corps, Officer Training School, the US Air Force Academy, and the Air National Guard, all commissioning into one common first education experience as commissioned officers."

([http://www.cdmag.com/articles/024/065/airforce\\_feature.html](http://www.cdmag.com/articles/024/065/airforce_feature.html), Morgan, 1999, 1). ASBC was also created because for years officers in the Air Force did not view themselves as Airmen but rather as pilots, navigators, ABMs, maintenance officers, and other duty titles awarded to them. ASBC, being the first PME for the Air Force officer, has attempted to eradicate this individualistic mindset and make every Air Force officer an Airman first by focusing on the three Core Values, six Core Competencies, and various weapons systems. ASBC, while contributing to Air Force development, does not help with regards to jointness. An emphasis on jointness could easily be added here by identifying the Air Force's impact on joint operations

Following the four week ASBC, education for the Air Force officer at the tactical career level then shifts to his basic specialty school. This school could be anywhere from just a few weeks to almost two years for Air Force operators such as pilots, air battle managers, and

navigators. At these basic schools the officer's primary responsibility is to learn his trade and gain proficiency in his platform.

It is in the tactical career level where an Air Force officer may have the opportunity to attend tactical schools such as United States Air Force Weapons School, Marine Corps Weapons and Tactics Instructor (WTI) course, and Navy TOP GUN. These excellent schools range on average between six weeks for TOP GUN and six months for the Air Force Weapons School. However, the opportunities to attend TOP GUN and WTI are very slim. Air Force wide the trend has been for three operators Air Force wide to attend the school (Personal Discussion, LT Chris Mullit, 2005). This number is miniscule when upon graduation you are asking these individuals to make the Air Force smart on Marine Corps and Navy tactics, techniques, and procedures. The slots available to those outside the Marine Corps and Navy must be increased to include Air Force and Army where appropriate.

Outside of traditional Developmental Education and technical training, the Air Force has written doctrine to help guide officers at the tactical career level by providing six principles. The six Tactical Guiding Principles for the Air Force officer are "build Air Force cultural awareness, build Airmen core values, build skill competence, build expeditionary expertise, build expertise through mentoring, and build joint and coalition knowledge." It goes on to say, "contemporary military operations involved Airmen in joint operations and very often coalition operations. As they develop their expertise, the skills and development process is enhanced by participation in joint and coalition exercises and contingency deployments. Such exercise or real-world events provide awareness of the integration of air and space power with the capabilities of other Services, components, and allies" (AFDD 1-1, 2004, 29). One will notice that Air Force doctrine does specifically address building joint and coalition knowledge which adds to a joint

mindedness. However, more must be done within the Air Force than just merely identifying the building of joint knowledge. A ways and means must be attached to this ends if the Air Force officer at the tactical level is going to increase his joint mindedness.

### **Assignments**

This first assignment for the Air Force officer is based strictly on the needs of the Air Force and typically has no negative impact on what type exercises or operations the officer participates in. The officer can expect to spend a minimum of three years at his first assignment and in some cases, like ABMs at Tinker AFB or Electronic Warfare Officers at Offutt AFB or Davis-Monthan AFB, they can expect to spend at least five years. The Air Force does not perceive this as adverse to their career because they are primarily becoming masters in their platform and gaining experience required to be tactically proficient.

Assignments for the Air Force officer at the tactical career level are rarely joint in nature. There are only a handful of opportunities for Air Force operators to branch out and share their Air Force expertise while at the same time gain valuable experience from another Service. In the early 1990s there were opportunities for Air Force officers in certain career fields to spend an assignment with the Navy. These included opportunities for ABMs and fighter pilots. The last ABM finished his tour with the Navy in 1998 and there has not been an exchange since. These exchange programs and others similar to them must be reinstated and increased. They benefit both the Air Force and the Navy.

Although interservice exchanges have gone down since the 1990s, the exchanges with other nations are alive and well. For example, there are still fighter and cargo pilot exchanges that take place between the U.S. and the Netherlands, Australia, Great Britain, Germany, and Japan. These exchanges provide the officers with much different perspectives then they have

been accustomed to, as well as a coalition approach to operations at the tactical level. Most recently, an Airman was cited for his support of the tsunami relief efforts while working with the Japanese Air Self Defense Force. In fact the “first USAF/JASDF Officer Exchange Program position was established in 1976, as ‘Instructor-JSADF Air Staff College in Tokyo” (Daitch, 2005, 1).

### **Exercises and Operations**

Once an Air Force officer is awarded his career field specialty and proceeds to his first unit he upgrades to combat mission ready status. His combat mission ready status means he is now ready to participate in exercises and deploy with his squadron when it is their turn in the Air and Space Expeditionary Force (AEF) cycle. Typically, over a 20-month period an officer will deploy for 120 days in support of the unit’s tasking. Up to the point of unit’s deployment the officer would have participated in various spin-ups and exercises.

These exercises are part of the normal AEF rotation and will in some cases expose the officer to his first joint or coalition exercise. Examples of these would be Exercise RED FLAG which takes place at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada or Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment (JEFX). RED FLAG “exercise participants come from flying units around the Air Force. Sometimes the Navy, Marines, Army and allied forces take part too.”

([http://www.nellis.af.mil/red\\_flag/](http://www.nellis.af.mil/red_flag/), 2003, 1) “JEFX is a Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF)-sponsored, Major Command-executed series of experiments that combine live fly, live-play, ground and naval forces, simulations, and technology insertion into a near-seamless warfighting environment” (<http://afeo.langley.af.mil/gateway/jefx04.asp>, 2004, 1).

These two exercises provide a good example of where an Air Force officer can get solid exposure to joint operations at the tactical level. In fact, RED FLAG was specifically developed

after seasoned aircrews returned from Vietnam with their combat exercises. They realized their preparations for combat in Southeast Asia were inadequate, thus, identifying a need to create a quarterly exercise. However, an exercise such as JEFX happens only once every two years. This means that the unit has to be selected to participate and the officer also has to be selected to take part in the exercise. What this translates to is typically out of the first eight years of an officer's career he may only get to participate once. The downside to a JEFX is that it only occurs once every two years and likewise a RED FLAG four to five times a year. This means that an officer's timing needs to be perfect such that they first get a chance to deploy for RED FLAG, and second for it to be a joint or coalition RED FLAG. These exercises, although not completely joint provide a snapshot of potential "joint" opportunities which need to be requisites for the Air Force operator at the tactical career level.

Exercises are conducted to prepare the force for war. As a junior officer, it is these operational experiences that shape him and act as a basis of experience later in his career. Present day operations such as OEF and OIF have given officers at the tactical career level an opportunity to operate in a joint environment, not only in southwest Asia, but around the world. With that being said, the phase of the operation typically depends on the level of joint interoperability. For example, based on personal experience, Operation SOUTHERN WATCH (OSW) offered the perfect opportunity to interface with platforms from sister Services and increase joint mindedness. Granted, OSW and ONW challenged certain career fields with demanding deployment schedules, but there was always a great benefit to joint acculturation. OSW subsequently turned into OIF and what exists today is a smaller operation with minor joint interaction.

For example, the one of the largest air expeditionary wings in SWA is located at Al Udeid, Qatar. In any given Air and Space Expeditionary Force (AEF) there is a mix of lift, tanker, fighter, and command and control aircraft. During the years leading up to decisive combat operations and the period shortly thereafter, the mix of joint platforms was impressive. With the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq those aircraft and support platforms that normally would have gone to Saudi Arabia are now spread out through the theater. The opportunity still presents itself to work together in an operational perspective but the acculturation of being together is currently not there.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

Air Force doctrine is taking initial steps towards addressing joint mindedness with what is said in AFDD-1. However, there needs to be a greater emphasis on jointness at the service academy and an expansion of Joint Military Science Leadership Centers, such as currently provided at USF, by ROTC detachments across the nation. ASBC, which is necessary education for the junior Air Force officer, must expand to include an emphasis on the Air Force's role in joint operations. Officers who pursue Professional Military Education by correspondence of sister Services increase their joint mindedness. Specific technical education such as TOP GUN and WTI have very limited number of slots for sister Service students. The increase of their slots for sister Service students must occur and would facilitate greater jointness.

Sister Service exchanges between such career fields as pilots and Air Battle Managers would assist greatly with joint acculturation. Those programs just identified, literally went defunct and need to be revitalized and re-instituted immediately. Opportunities to visit a sister Service while in garrison or at sea also must be emphasized to the maximum extent. As difficult as these opportunities may be to achieve they will inevitably aid in joint mindedness.

Exercises such as RED FLAG and others like it must be methodically embedded into an officer's career. These training opportunities should strive to include joint participation each and every time. Likewise, in order to maintain accountability of all joint exercises and joint operations officers participate in, a joint tracking system must exist. If these operations and exercises are uniformly joint coded then each Service, as well as, other Services will be able to identify who has participated. This will most certainly help as this officer continues in his career.

## **Marine Corps**

### **Tactical Career Level**

#### **Education**

Schooling for the Marine officer occurs in much the same fashion as it does for the officers in the other Services. A Marine officer is prepared through sound education in one of three processes: reserve officer training corps (ROTC) at universities throughout the nation, officer candidate school (OCS) at Quantico, or through the United States Naval Academy. The education a Marine officer gets through OCS and ROTC is Marine oriented in nature. The Marine who gains a commission as a second lieutenant through the Naval Academy is a midshipman for all four years until his day of commissioning when he becomes a Marine officer. Therefore, his primary knowledge level is that of Navy. This is ultimately not a detriment to him as every Marine officer must go to The Basic School (TBS) or Basic as it is affectionately known by all who pass through there.

The Basic School at Quantico is literally the launching point for Marine officers for the remainder of their careers. Whether someone is to be an aviator, infantryman, artilleryman, intelligence, or another MOS they must complete the six month period satisfactorily. It is here in



these six months the young Marine officers form impenetrable bonds with each other such that when the day comes for them to employ as part of a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF), they are a formidable fighting force. Marine officers get a sense of their responsibilities from Basic. If you ask a Marine aviator why he flies and employs his F/A-18, he will tell you, "It is to support the Marine on the ground". If you ask an Artilleryman why he must learn and be proficient at employing his battery of howitzers, he will answer, "It is to pave the way and shape the battlefield for the Marines coming through." These answers are consistent because these Marine officers are formed into a fighting force, a fighting force with 20-20 combat vision and attitude shaped, molded, and cured at The Basic School. The education received at TBS is Marine specific and Marines feel this is important because it is the competencies learned there that they bring with them into joint operations as a Marine Air Ground Task Force or MAGTF.

After a Marine gets his commission and graduates from TBS they are then off to individual training. For example, Marine Artillery officers will get their training over a six-month period at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. A Marine aviator will go through Pensacola Naval Air Station, Florida alongside their Navy counterparts. Individual training is specific to the Marine, and upon graduation from their particular school, they will then be assigned to a unit and become a member of the fleet.

The next educational opportunity for the Marine officer is the Career Level Course (CLC), formerly the Expeditionary Warfare School. This is a company grade level school designed to provide the necessary skills to lead a battery, company, or flight. It is similar to the Army's CCC and the Air Force's SOS (Squadron Officer School). Marine officers who graduate from CLC are ready for the next challenge of their careers, their first command opportunity. Another educational opportunity for the Marine officer is called the Advanced Course. The

Advanced Course is designed to take that Marine officer to the next level and prepare them for more increased technical responsibility as well as some leadership responsibility specifically within the Marine Corps.

### **Assignments**

A Marine who joins the fleet will normally be a part of one of the three Marine Expeditionary Forces (MEFs). These MEFs are led by either two or three-star general officers. It was I MEF led by Lieutenant General James Conway that so swiftly defeated Iraqi forces along side the Army's V Corps in their race to capture Baghdad. Directly below the MEF are MEBs or Marine Expeditionary Brigades. In addition to MEBs, there are also Infantry Regiments and Aviation Groups. The MEBs are classified as Division, Wing, or Force Service Support Groups (FSSG). The Marine officer will fall into one of these particular groups depending on his Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). For example, the Marine aviator will be in a squadron such as VMFA-212 which is part of an Air Wing. A Marine Infantryman will be in a platoon which is in a battalion reporting to the regiment. It is important to understand the Marine construct because when Marines fight they bring all their capabilities together such as air, ground, support, and command to fight as a MAGTF. This however does not directly translate to joint acculturation. It just means they understand different capabilities of different systems.

Normally, by the time a Marine officer gets to the fleet he is a very senior second lieutenant or, in the case of Marine aviators, a first lieutenant, because of the time spent in flight training. Marines are immediately thrust into leadership roles when they get to their units. A Marine Artilleryman, for example, may be a Forward Observer (FO) where he is responsible for a team of Marines. As an artilleryman, the Marine would then go on to be either a Fire Direction

Officer (FDO) or an Executive Officer to a Company or Battery Commander. If a Marine officer was to go from FO to FDO to Executive Officer he would then be a senior lieutenant and be ready to move for the first time to another unit within the fleet. By the time the Marine officer moves from his first unit, he should have learned his trade and become skilled at his MOS. An experienced Marine Corps lieutenant colonel Artilleryman of twenty years went on to explain some challenges of this first assignment.:

“Lieutenants have experienced NCOs working for them. Some of these NCOs are excellent and provide sound judgment. Some of these NCOs do not. It is here in the lieutenant’s first assignment where the lieutenant learns how to exercise good judgment and make solid decisions. Some lieutenants do better than others but it is the lieutenant’s next assignment where he will have tremendous amounts of responsibility. So, the bottom line is he needs to learn quickly. Many more lives will depend on the decisions he makes” (Personal Interview, LtCol L. Harrelson, 2005).

LtCol Harrelson articulates a valid concern, but part of a young Marine officer’s thoughts must include how his decisions have an impact beyond his small unit. In today’s day and age, much like tactical actions may have a strategic impact, they may also have a profound impact on the joint force.

The rank of Captain for a Marine occurs during his second assignment where his reputation is starting to be earned. This reputation is something Marine officers work very hard to earn and maintain not only in his early years but in his later years as well. The consummate Marine officer does not want to let the Marine Corps down but more importantly to the Marine he does not want to let his fellow Marines down. It is this exact attitude that must prevail now

and also in the future between the Services. Officers must feel this way about their fellow officers in the other Services and fully embody joint mindedness.

It is in the second assignment for a Marine officer where he takes command of a battery or company. As mentioned earlier, this command opportunity comes after his CLC and in some cases after his attendance at his respective Advanced Courses. For example, a Marine Artilleryman will go to his next assignment, spend six-months to a year there, and then attend the CLC and return to the unit. After returning to the unit, the Marine officer then assumes command of his unit.

Once a Marine has finished his first command, he will then proceed to another assignment. In this assignment, the Marine will still stay within the boundaries of the Marine Corps because the Major's board is coming up quickly. An experienced Marine officer of twenty years said when talking about the possibility of going to a B-billet, which is a Marine Corps staff billet, after battery command, "As a Marine you are just starting to feel comfortable within the Corps, why would you go to a job outside the Marine Corps" (Personal Interview, LtCol Harrelson)? To answer that specific question, a Marine needs to go outside of his Service to increase his joint mindedness.

### **Exercises and Operations**

The Marines have a very simple philosophy when it comes to exercise and training, "we train as we expect to fight, and we will fight as we are trained." They take training and exercises so seriously they say "training is also a professional and moral imperative." The Marine Corps on a whole conducts "10 to 12 combined-arms exercises annually at Twenty-Nine Palms, California." It is at this Marine Air Ground Combat Center that Marines in all of the career levels get the training they need for their participation in operations. The maneuvers and drills

“provide training and combat readiness evaluations for Marine tactical air and assault support squadrons operating in support of ground forces” (GlobalSecurity.Org, Marine Corps Exercises, 2004, 1).

The training received at Twenty-Nine Palms is of course Marine specific. Because Marines need to be trained for both at sea and ashore operations, Twenty-Nine Palms provides that venue for exercises. The “premier internal Marine Corps training event remains the Combined Arms exercise (CAX) conduct at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. The CAX which is Marine specific “represents the best opportunity to hone MAGTF [Marine Air-Ground Task Force] warfighting skills (GlobalSecurity.org, Marine Corps Exercises, 2004, 2).

There are however other opportunities for Marine aviators, especially fighter pilots, to participate in exercises that are joint. A few examples include RED FLAG, MAPLE FLAG, Cobra Gold, and Foal Eagle. Although these opportunities are rare compared to their fighter counterparts in the Air Force, they do get a chance to see the larger operational perspective. This larger perspective has served the Marine Corps well especially during major combat operations, which there have been no shortages of in recent years.

In 1999, Marine EA-6B crews were the predominant electronic countermeasures force during Operation ALLIED FORCE (OAF). For operations in OEF, Marine infantry were some of the first on the ground in Afghanistan. Most recently for decisive combat operations in OIF, the MAGTF was in full force as I MEF hammered its way to Baghdad. And despite a recent initiative to reduce the numbers of Marines in Iraq, some Marine units are on their third rotation. Likewise, there are Marine units such as Marine Air Control Squadron (MACS) 4 that are working on their third rotation to Afghanistan. Currently, the “Marine presence in Iraq is again centered around the I Marine Expeditionary Force and the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division.” As of summer

2004, “26,427 Marines were deployed in Iraq. An additional 657 were deployed in the Horn of Africa” (GlobalSecurity.org, US Forces Order of Battle, 2005, 4).

Current numbers estimate the Marine Corps to be roughly 168,000 strong with approximately 25,000 officers. Therefore, a Marine falling within the tactical career level, may be involved with joint operations prior to participating in a joint exercise.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

Educationally speaking and a common theme within the tactical career level education is reading. Lieutenant General Mattis in an article titled *Revamped reading list makes debut* said of reading “There are 112 books on the list--45 for enlisted Marines, 83 for officers. Sixteen are on both lists.” He goes on to say, “By reading, you learn through others’ experiences, generally a better way to do business...especially in our line of work where the consequences of incompetence are so final for young men” (MCT, 2005, 1). Similar book lists now exist within the Air Force, Army, and Navy. It is the reading of sister Service books that could certainly benefit the Marine Corps officer as well as others.

Mastering Service competencies are of great importance for the Marine officer. In doing so at the tactical career level there is little joint acculturation due to service requirements. Marine officers must be given an opportunity to pursue other operational assignments outside of the Marine Corps and not be penalized within their Service. For example, Marine Corps fighter pilots who could serve two to three years with an Air Force unit flying their aircraft benefit both officer and Service. These opportunities for officers of like capabilities must be increased. Likewise, Marine Infantry officers could spend a tour with an Army Infantry unit. This will increase joint mindedness within each Service. Further, Marine helicopter pilots could do a comparable exchange tour with the Army or Air Force. These increased opportunities outside

the Marine Corps may be difficult due to Service requirements, but should not be viewed as detrimental to the officer's career.

## **Operational Career Level**

The Chairman's focus for all officers at the Intermediate educational level is "Warfighting within the context of Operational Art...theater strategy and plans, national military strategy and national security strategy." Further, it is to "Develop analytical capabilities and creative thought." Within both the Intermediate and Senior (discussed later) educational level the emphasis in Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) I and II is with "joint and multinational forces at the operational level of war, joint planning...interagency and multinational capabilities." (CJCSI 1800.01B, 2004, A-A-A-1). At Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), Army Command and General Staff College (ACGSC), College of Naval Command and Staff (CNCS) at the Naval War College, and Marine Corps Command and Staff College (MCCSC), officers receive Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) I credit.

It is also during this operational career level the officer in the grade of O-4, O-5, or O-6 may go to the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) for JPME Phase II. The 2005 NDAA authorizes the CJCS to accredit Service Senior Level Colleges; hence, in the future the War Colleges will award Phase II along with the Joint Combined Warfighting School at JFSC. "Phase II emphasizes joint perspectives, with a focus on planning, operations, and procedures" ([http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu/schools\\_programs/rcjpme/overview.asp](http://www.jfsc.ndu.edu/schools_programs/rcjpme/overview.asp), 2005, 4).

One problem that has occurred in recent years with some officers coming to JPME Phase II at the JFSC is that they are getting the education following the completion of their JDA. The whole purpose of Phase II JPME is to educate the officer on the intricacies of campaign planning and operating in a joint arena along with acculturation. Granting the officer JPME Phase II credit it is of little value to the officer at the end of his tour. For joint mindedness to really take effect JPME II must be attained prior to his joint duty assignment.



## **Army**

### **Operational Career Level**

The operational career level of the Army officer is from the twelfth to roughly the twenty-fourth year of service. It “begins with selection for promotion to major immediately followed by Career Field designation and first consideration for CSC. The junior field grade years serve to develop the officer cohort in a variety of branch or functional area assignments within their Career Field.” Within these initial years as a Major in the Army “the general developmental goals are to complete Military Education Level (MEL) 4 or CSC schooling by resident or nonresident instruction, and to meet either the basic branch qualification or functional area qualification criteria at the this grade prior to consideration for lieutenant colonel” (HQ/USA, 1998, 11).

Officers who have excellent records as Majors may be selected for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel which totals “about 70 percent of a cohort year group.” Lieutenant colonels “make the maximum contribution to the Army as commanders and senior staff officers. Attaining the grade of lieutenant colonel is considered to be the hallmark of a successful career. It is an exceedingly proud accomplishment to wear the silver oak leaves of a lieutenant colonel. Cohort year group officers are normally considered for promotion to O-6 in the primary zone in their 21<sup>st</sup> year of service with a selection rate for promotion to O-6 of 50 percent” (HQ/USA, 1998, 12).

After an Army officer is selected for colonel he is then considered in the senior field grade zone of his career. For the purposes of this study, the early colonel years constitute operational career level and the later years constitute the strategic career level. The aspects of the strategic career level will be discussed thoroughly in the next section. However, the

difference between an Army colonel at the operational career level and an Army colonel at the strategic career level is due to time in grade as well as the assignment. For this research, an Army officer serving as a brigade commander will be considered operational career level. In comparison, for this research, the Army colonel who serves as the Chief of Plans at HQ U.S. Central Command, or perhaps the Chief of Plans and Strategy for Multi-National Forces Iraq will be at the strategic career level. This same Army colonel could go from one career level to the next and back depending on the level of the position. The amount of influence his decisions have and the impacts of the results of those decisions determine the career level. Similarly, his level of joint acculturation may fluctuate based on his position.

As expected, there are goals the Army colonel must achieve and they are, “to further enhance branch or functional area skill proficiency through additional senior level assignments and schooling. Colonels in the Operations level Field will serve in the high level staff positions while alternating between branch/functional area generalist billets.” The Army officer who attains the rank of colonel is “truly the elite of the officer corps”. (HQ/USA, 1998, 11). The elite of the Army officer corps in some cases may immediately translate to an Army expert but not a joint expert.

### **Education**

Operational career level education in the Army predominantly resides at Fort Leavenworth in the form of Command and General Staff College (CGSC). This professional military education is for those Majors who have done especially well in their Army careers and are consistently above center mass on their Officer Evaluation Records (OER). CGSC is the senior education institution for teaching tactics and staff procedures for the United States Army. “Within the four schools of the college we train more than 22,000 resident and nonresident

officers annually, including Army active and reserve components, international, and officers from our sister Services. CGSC educates company and field grade officers in the profession of arms across the entire spectrum of conflict” (Command and General Staff College, Homepage, 2005, Page 1).

Within CGSC is the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC), the “flagship of five schools in the college” which the major attends. The areas of concentration are tactics and logistics at the brigade, division, and corps level of warfighting...operational art and strategy, history, leadership, the human dimension of war, and joint and multinational operations. A student receives about 300 hours of Joint Plans and Operations Instruction, which will enable them to achieve Joint Professional Military Education (JPME-I) certification” (CGSC, Navy Element, 2005, Page 1). The joint education received at CGSC is important and one aspect of what is needed for this officer to increase his joint mindedness.

The next education level at Fort Leavenworth is the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS). The two programs that fall under SAMS are the Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) and the Advanced Operational Arts Studies Fellowship (AOASF). The AMSP at Fort Leavenworth is similar to the programs established at Maxwell Air Force Base (School of Advanced Airpower Studies) and Quantico’s School of Advanced Warfare. “The AMSP is a graduate-level program of the School of Advanced Military Studies that provides education in military art and science. Focus is on the military art and science of planning, preparing and executing full spectrum operations in joint, multinational, and interagency contexts.” It is important to note that graduates of the AMSP helped plan the very successful land campaign of Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM. “Following graduation, officers serve a twelve-month

utilization tour in critical battle staff positions within division or corps HQ” (SAMS, AMSP, 2004, 1).

Lastly, there is the AOASF, the second program within SAMS that is an echelon above AMSP. The AOASF program is at the very high end of the Operation career level education and could very well be included in the strategic section of Army career level education. This program “is the capstone program of SAMS. Focused at the Operational and Strategic levels of war, AOASF is a two-year SSC-level course that prepares senior officers for colonel-level command and for operational planning assignments to within combatant and service component commands” (SAMS, AOASF, 2004, 1). After AOASF, graduates finish the first year of the course as a fellow, and then stay on as a faculty member in the AMSP.

### **Assignments**

Once an Army Major graduates from an intermediate level school such as CGSOC (CGSC), Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS), ACSC, or Naval Command and Staff College, they will more than likely go back to an operational unit. This is done to branch qualify the officer as battalion S3 or battalion XO. “Duty in qualifying assignments is an essential ingredient in the career development of majors prior to promotion to lieutenant colonel” (HQ/USA, 1998, 11). With the branch qualification, “an officer’s chance of getting promoted is high but without it they are at extreme risk of not advancing” (Personal Interviews, LTC J. Bassani, 2005). It is within reason to state branch qualification is more important to an officer at that point in his career than joint credit.

For an Army Major, “the sequence of branch qualifying is not a consideration for board deliberations or for professional development” (HQ/USA, 1998, 11). It is only “after an Army officer branch qualifies as a Major that his first opportunity to pursue a truly joint job exists.”

Traditional joint duty assignments an Army Major will go to are the Joint Staff at the Pentagon, a Defense Agency staff or a Combatant Command. These are typically three year assignments and may or may not help an Army officer become a battalion commander. Army officers emphatically believe “what makes an Army officer a battalion commander is the time spent branch qualifying as a Major. It is these records, these experiences, and these opportunities coupled with strong OERs that will get an Army officer to BN command” (Personal Interview, LTC J. Bassani, 2005). Yet again, an officer’s time spent branch qualifying is more significant for assuming a command position within the Army than a joint position.

The Army’s Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management pamphlet articulates “the Joint Duty Assignment list contains approximately 1150 major authorizations and officers will continue to have the opportunity for assignment to joint duty positions as an integral part of his development”. However, as a previous Aviation Branch Assignments officer put it “the Army being such a large entity has too many Major billets within the Army to fill which is why there is a limited opportunity for every officer to pursue a joint job” (Personal Interview, Major W.A. Ryan). Nevertheless, an Army officer will branch qualify as a major first and then seek an opportunity to fill one of those joint billets.

The Army’s template for career guidance, the Commissioned Officer Development and Career Management pamphlet, is very specific in the lieutenant colonel area of its pamphlet. First it talks about goals for a lieutenant colonel should be “to gain branch, functional area, and skill proficiency at the senior levels through assignments and schooling”. Furthermore, “most officers will serve in high visibility billets in either his branch or functional area, with a possible assignment to a branch/functional area generalist position.” It then goes to talk about specific branch qualification by stating “normally, lieutenant colonel branch qualifications consist of at

least 12 months in a branch coded position.” When it comes to battalion command for the superior lieutenant colonels, only “about 40 percent of any cohort can expect selection and approximately 30 to 35 percent will go to senior service school” (HQ/USA, 1998, 12). Getting even more detailed, examination of recent results for Infantry battalion commanders reveals there are two facts that stand out. The first is “by percentage of commands, tactical commanders stand a better chance of selection to SSC than TSS [Training Service Support] or institutional commanders. Also, the highest percentage of officers was selected the same year they gave up command. Lastly, an officer’s chance for selection diminishes if not selected that year” (Alex, 2005, 2-3). What this says then is that those Infantry battalion commanders out there who are deploying to OIF or OEF are being looked upon favorably if they perform well. Also, that when that battalion commander is in the final year of his command, he stands the best opportunity to get selected for SSC and continue his professional military education in residence.

For joint duty assignments, the lieutenant colonel has a greater opportunity for a joint duty assignment. The Army’s Commissioned Officer pamphlet identifies a fairly similar theme to that of the major’s when it refers to JDA. It goes on to say “the Joint Duty Assignment Listing (JDAL) contains approximately 1350 lieutenant colonel authorizations and officers will continue to have the opportunity for assignment to joint duty positions as an integral part of their careers.” Just examining a small sampling of the four lieutenant colonels in JAWS AY 04-05 class where three of the four are promotable, none of them have ever had a joint assignment. The minimum time in service for these lieutenant colonels is nineteen years. What this shows, is that in several situations, that if lieutenant colonels are to maintain their competitiveness within the Army they need to serve as battalion commanders in tactical units, deploy to get combat

experience, and forgo joint duty assignments (JDA) in order to gain further experience with their branch or functional areas.

The Army lieutenant colonels that perform remarkably well during their tenures stand a chance of making colonel. “Attaining the grade of colonel is realized by a select few and truly constitutes the elite of the officer corps. As colonels, their maximum contribution to the Army is made as commanders and senior staff officers.” Assignments for colonels in the Army are to be in “branch coded positions at the brigade, division, corps and echelons above corps in the TOE environment [tables of organization and equipment].” Joint or JDA opportunities for colonels in the Army contain about “620 colonel billets in branch and functional area positions. Officers who did not serve as majors or lieutenant colonels in the JDAL should continue to seek joint development” (HQ/USA, 1998, 11). By this time it is rather late into one’s career, however jointness still must happen. The last sentence above needs to be rewritten to say, officers must continue to seek joint development.

### **Exercises and Operations**

As an Army officer reaches the operational career level, his focus changes to one requiring him to take on greater leadership roles in both training and operations. These leadership roles could mean leading their squadron from Fort Carson to the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, depending on which theater they are heading to. For example, “each training center is custom fit to a different theater of operation the U.S. Army may encounter in its many endeavors throughout the world. The National Training Center focuses on High Intensity Conflicts in the desert, while Joint Readiness Training Center focuses on light fighting skills” (GlobalSecurity.Org, Army Exercises, 2002, 3).

Exercises at a CTC or JRTC ensure participants within the battalion are prepared for a major inspection. These exercises provide the perfect setting for those officers who are climbing through the ranks to practice their leadership skills prior to arriving in combat for what sometimes is their first time. Exercises such as Millennium Challenge, Ulchi Focus Lens, Cobra Gold and those at the various CTCs provide the field grade officer with valuable experience.

As an officer ascends in rank, the exercises needed for him to grow become increasingly difficult. In the operational career level the role the officer fills will of course depend upon his rank along with his level of responsibility. For example, there are “small unit exercises, battalion exercises, brigade exercises and division level exercises.” Examples from these different levels include “Lane Training Exercise (LANEX) for small unit, Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE) for battalion exercises, and Field Training Exercise (FTX) for brigade exercises.” All of these exercises “emphasize current doctrine and correction applications of sound tactical principles, and allows command and staff participation in multi-echelon training” (GlobalSecurity.org, Army Exercises, 2002, 3-4). It is very rare that these exercises have a joint essence to them. For that reason, these exercises also must be expanded to emphasize the need for joint participants even at the lowest levels.

A former brigade planner in OIF, who carries extensive combat experience in the Apache, said “as Army officers get to the O-4 and O-5 level it is more about performing leadership roles along with more planning and less of out in the field or in the cockpit duties.” He goes on to explain, “When you are a lieutenant or captain it is easy to get immersed in the technical aspects of the job. It is also somewhat easy to get your company of four aircraft ready to go to an exercise. However, as you progress in rank that normally means increased responsibility. In other words, exercises provide an excellent opportunity for the company,



battalion, and brigade commander to cut their teeth on the required logistics, planning, and execution.” He ended the discussion on Army exercises by identifying how his unit was planning to head to Nellis AFB for RED FLAG prior to heading to OEF. This would have been the first time an Apache unit had supported RED FLAG.

As at the tactical career level, these exercises are valuable to a company, squadron, battalion, division, regiment, or corps. Lieutenant Colonel Dolan, who is a combat veteran of both DESERT STORM and OIF, said “when I was squadron commander I couldn’t get my squadron in enough exercises. I honestly believed that if my troops practiced their maneuvers enough and experienced mental toughness that when it came time to go to war then we would be ready.” (Personal Interview, LTC W. Dolan, 2005). LTC Dolan’s preparation of his unit through multiple exercises proved crucial as his unit received the call to deploy to Iraq to take part in OIF. These exercises are part of a unit’s preparation for operations that as mentioned earlier in this research span the globe.

The operations cover a wide variety of combat and non-combat missions ranging from fighting insurgents, to civil affairs and reconstruction operations, to training military forces of other nations in counternarcotics, counterterrorism, and counterinsurgency tactics” (Feickert, 2005, 2). Those officers at the operational career level who have had the opportunity to participate in an operation consider themselves truly blessed. By the time the Army officer has reached this stage of his career he has led troops from anywhere between four to twenty years. In OIF for example, LTC Bill Dolan had the task of securing the western border of Iraq along with maintaining civil order.

He goes on to say, “being able to lead my armored cavalry unit into combat was a phenomenal experience. It was challenging, stimulating, and exhausting all at the same time.

Although this was predominately an Army operation out to the west, we did have AF liaisons with us and we also did attempt to work with the non-governmental agencies such as Doctors without Borders”. When asked of what helped prepare him for this seemingly large task he replied by saying, “earlier in my career I had the chance to participate in Bosnia stability operations. It is how we were taught to work with locals and the experiences I took with me that were most valuable for my time in Iraq.” He then identifies that, “after OIF I moved to a new position at the NTC, Fort Irwin, California where I saw the Army train on a daily basis. We immediately implemented Army lessons from OIF into the scenarios. I also noticed that CTCs do prepare you well for operations but we can still do better” (Personal Interview, LTC Dolan, 2005).

As compared to major combat operations the initial transition that followed in Iraq, “the major challenges to coalition forces are now quelling a persistent Iraqi resistance movement, restoring civil order, and providing basic services to the urban population.” For the S-3s, Battalion Commanders, Deputy Brigade commanders their experiences have a much greater coalition emphasis than joint. There are “about 25,000 non-US troops in theater, with Britain, Poland, the Netherlands, Italy, and the Ukraine being the largest contributors” (Bowman, 2004, 2). The coalition experience will be a valuable one as the officer steps forward further into his career.

All five Army officers with combat operations experience that are in the JAWS 04-05 class agreed operational experience in combat is an absolute must if you are going to lead a brigade, division, corps, Army, or JTF. LTC Bassani, former HH-60 squadron commander in the Republic of Korea and a veteran of deployments in Central and South America said, “When you are placed into a combat situation it inherently means it is going to be a dangerous situation.

Therefore, as a commander of larger forces and in some cases joint forces, you have credibility. You had credibility with your troops and peers because they recognize your decisions are based on experience and also that you have been there. Anyone can make a good decision but it is those officers who make great decisions due to experience that are valuable” (Personal Interview, LTC J. Bassani, 2005). Thus, joint mindedness is critical and should be second nature while for an Army officer at war.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

The way jointness is incorporated into an ordinary career path is not as deliberate as it must be. Hence, an officer should strive for attendance at a sister Service school or at JAWS which is the preferred option due to its small and specialized nature. However, attendance at the Navy, Air Force, or Marine command and staff college would still lend to joint acculturation. For majors within the Army there still exists a need to get branch qualified to be competitive for promotion and battalion command. As long as the Army imposes branch qualifications there is no way to circumvent this requirement thus leading to fewer joint minded Army officers. It is post battalion command that an officer has the greatest opportunity to fill a joint billet. Prior to a battalion command it is mainly needs of the Army and branch qualification requirements. In today’s Army, officers are getting jointness by their participation in real world joint operations around the globe. This joint operational combat experience is highlighted as necessary for future command opportunities. The Army noticeably emphasizes their Service requirements at the expense of joint mindedness.

## **Navy**

### **Operational Career Level**

The operational career level of a Navy officer's career is those years between O-4 and O-6. These are the years where a Lieutenant Commander, Commander, and Captain pursue and assume greater responsibilities in fleet and shore based duties. Educationally speaking, the opportunities and requirements for technical education are very limited whereas Professional Military Education (PME) is expanded significantly. Where an officer is assigned and the responsibilities associated the position will ultimately determine his future competitiveness in the Navy. Little variations from the norm exist in exercises and operations except for perhaps the increased responsibilities within the squadrons associated with experience levels and rank.

### **Education**

The Naval War College on Coasters Harbor Island in Newport Rhode Island serves as the recognizable epicenter of Naval professional military education. The "Naval War College has two clear, mutually supporting missions: to educate tomorrow's leaders for the Navy and our nation, and to define the future Navy" (<http://www.nwc.navy.mil/L1/missionstate.htm>, 2005, 1). The Naval War College has three predominant PME programs operating within the confines of the college--The College of Command and Staff, Naval Operational Planner Course, and The College of Naval Warfare. The College of Command and Staff program is offered at the operational career level of one's career. This "is a multidisciplinary program designed for U.S. Naval and Coast Guard officers in the grades of lieutenant commander, U.S. Marine Corps, Army, and Air Force officers in the grade of major, and civilians of equivalent seniority in various Federal agencies." The College of Naval Command and Staff is an "intermediate level

service college course providing an initial opportunity for professional military education...”

(<http://.nwc.navy.mil/academics/colleges/cncs.htm>, 2005, 1).

Naval officers in the grade of O-4 chosen for this particular PME opportunity are at the thirteen to fourteen year points in their careers. While attending this year long course, they receive Navy related studies coupled with two to three electives the officers are required to take over the three trimesters. “Students in each of the Naval War College’s pursue three core subject areas in the following order of presentation: Strategy and Power, Joint Maritime Operations, and National Security Decision Making” (<http://.nwc.navy.mil/academics/colleges/cncs.htm>, 2005, 1). The curriculum at Naval War College is more joint in focus at both the intermediate and senior level than the other Service schools. Additionally, if one looks at the percentage of USN officers vice the sister Services and compare the numbers to ACSC, MCSC, and CGSC, one will note that the percentage of host Service is lowest at CNCS.

Up until 1997 the Navy did not have an advanced studies program for intermediate level command and staff college/combat arms branch equivalents. That year, “the CNO asked RADM James Stark, Naval War College President, to assess the need for an advanced war-fighting course and, if one were recommended, to provide design alternatives.” The program was to be the equivalent of SAMS and the other Service advanced study programs. In the fall of 1998 the “Naval Operational Planner Course (NOPC) pilot program was conducted from November 1998 to September 1999 with eleven students (one Army, seven Navy, one Marine, two Air Force” ((<http://www.nwc.navy.mil/jmo/nopc/information.htm>, 2005, 5). NOPC produces planners who have key joint planning skills and follow-on assignments to numbered fleet staffs. A Navy officer’s career timing has to be near perfect for selection and attendance. In sum, NOPC is a good opportunity for the Navy officer who has solid records, did well at all his previous

academic opportunities, and is willing to pursue this program. NOPC focus on joint planning helps to develop jointness required of a future leader but “in full operation, a NOPC class of 13 students (notional size) convenes each August and graduates 3 months later”

(<http://www.nwc.navy.mil/jmo/nopc/information.htm>, 2005, 5). On average only nine Navy officers and one officer from each of the other Services are graduating from NOPC each year. In 2006 the numbers of Navy students will go up to eleven, Marines and Air Force will have zero and the Army will have one. Although NOPC generally has a small class size, Services must press to increase their level of representation.

The third PME program at The Naval War College will be discussed in the strategic career level section as it purposely deals with preparing Navy O-5s and O-6s for much greater challenges ahead in their careers.

### **Assignments**

It is at this ten to eleven year mark that the Navy officer will make his next rank of Lieutenant Commander. This is also where his career will increase in competitiveness for command. However, prior to the Navy officer getting selected for Commander Command, he first must prove himself as a Department Head. It is as a Department Head where “the wheat is separated from the chaff” (Personal Interview, CDR S. Miller, 2005). For example, in a Naval aviation unit an aspiring officer may be the maintenance, safety, operations, training, or administrative Department Head. For a Naval aviator to remain competitive for a warfare oriented Commander Command, he usually must assume responsibility as either the Operations Department Head or the Maintenance Department. This is due largely in part to the fact that these two positions are of greater responsibility in leading other officers and enlisted personnel.

The responsibility of a Department Head in the Navy is not necessarily long in duration. Someone who has a Department Head job can expect to spend as short as four and roughly up to ten months in the position. However, there are differences between Navy fixed wing aviators and helicopter pilots such as the number of aviators competing for positions. The key as described by Commander Miller is for “Department Head tour to overlap with a deployment to sea.” This provides the Executive Officer (XO) or Commander (CO) of the squadron a chance to evaluate the officer in a potentially stressful role. As is typically the situation, those officers who excel in the role of Department Head will go on to be XOs and COs of a squadron. However, before this challenge presents itself the officer may have a decision to make--Naval Postgraduate School or a Joint billet.

The graduated post Department Head must consider whether or not he wants to pursue a Master’s degree while assigned to the fleet or whether he desires to branch out and gain expertise in the joint arena. After speaking to a Navy Surface Warfare Officer (SWO), he said “based on my deployment schedule there was no way I was pursuing my Masters degree when the ship returned. Monterey was a golden opportunity to knock out my degree and not worry about it when I returned to the fleet. If I continue to be successful, I will pursue a JDA after senior service school” (Personal Interview, CDR R. Cepek, 2005). Post senior Service school is unquestionably too late to gain joint mindedness.

For both SWOs and aviators the harder decision for post Department Head choice resides with the aviators, because “a large proportion of the JDAL requires an aviation designator, and aviators also fill a large number of 1000 and 1050 [General Admin] billets”. This comes at a cost since “career path concerns may not support costing decisions” (Harrell, 2002, 4). The study concludes by mentioning that their recommendation to the Navy will be to “fill 1000 and

1050 billets mainly with SWOs and officers with other less expensive designators”. What this may do, is give aviators a possible opportunity to pursue a Masters degree at NPS which is only fifteen months long and then get them back to the fleet for a possible job as XO and CO of a squadron. However, going to NPS does not necessarily produce an officer who has completed the educational requirements for JSO. In fact, the only way that the JPME Phase I credit will be awarded is if the officer also “goes across the street” and attends the Fleet Seminar Program while also attending NPS. That is a non-resident variant of CNCS that is delivered by Naval War College faculty in a seminar format (i.e. face-to-face delivery mode) without a requirement to have a Service student mix in the classroom. In order to receive JPME Phase II credit, the officer will still need to attend JCWS.

If a Naval officer has been number one throughout their careers on their fitness reports (FITREPs) and the number one Department Head, the chances of commanding a unit or squadron are excellent. In the Navy, prior to an aviator assuming command, an officer will in almost all cases spend time as the XO of the squadron before fleeting up to be the CO. The XO and CO combination is one that lasts thirty months where the first fifteen are spent as an XO and the last fifteen are spent as the CO. “This is done so in the first 15 months the squadron gets to know the XO and also so the XO can get to know the squadron. This is so when the officer assumes command it is an easy transition for the squadron and also the officer” (Personal Interview, CDR S. Miller, 2005). This command for the officer is what’s called his Commander Command and is one of the most rewarding experiences of a Navy officer’s career.

In a personal interview with a former squadron CO of VAW-123, he made mention if he had to command all over again, he “would have steered his squadron more towards joint exercises”. His Commander Command took place during a deployment to OEF where his



support of troops on the ground in Afghanistan was especially rewarding. However, he then goes on to say “JAWS[Joint Advanced Warfighting School] has shaped the way I think about fighting joint and I believe with what I now know, I would have felt much more comfortable about organizing and training my squadron in getting prepared for a major operational deployment” (Personal Interview, CDR S. Miller, 2005). However, it is important to note that joint mindedness is not just merely an academic matter accomplished by attending a 10-month school. It is a compilation of education, exercises, operations, and assignments.

Upon completion of an officer’s Commander’s Command, there is an opportunity for them to go to a JDA. This tour could be accomplished at an assignment such as the Joint Staff, a major combatant command such as Pacific Command, or NATO. If an officer had a successful assignment as a commander and they have not been joint, in all likelihood they are going to a JDA. This is last resort and realistically too late in one’s career to get a solid introduction and acculturation into jointness.

### **Exercises and Operations**

The exercises open to the Navy officer are the same ones mentioned in the tactical career level section of this research. These exercises, although similar, will bear different responsibilities for the Naval officer. For example, in the Interdeployment Training Cycle (IDTC) there are three phases, basic, intermediate, and advanced. The basic portion of the training exercise cycle is unit training where an Air Wing may go to Fallon Naval Air Station. Once the Air Wing successful completes all unit training in the basic phase they will then move on the intermediate phase to conduct Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX). COMPUTEXs are a good test for an experience Naval officer because it is not just about executing tactics, but is also about integration between elements of the carrier. As the

COMPTUEX nears its end there is a Final Battle Problem (FBP) that tests the success of the staffs. FBP is “designed to stress the BG staff, carrier/air wing and BG units across all warfare areas” (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy COMPTUEX, 2003, 1). Therefore, within these basic and intermediate exercises the Naval officer is facing new challenges. His level of responsibility is greatly increased since during these exercises he is now a Department Head, XO, or CO.

It is almost guaranteed that a Naval officer between the rank of O-4 and early O-6 will spend at least three deployments out at sea. Deployments as a Department Head, XO, and CO help define him as a future leader in the Navy and possibly into the joint community.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

Although the College of Naval Warfare has a block of academics on Joint Military Operations, a Navy officer achieves greater joint mindedness by attendance at JAWS or a sister Service school. This also holds true for the Navy officer who has the opportunity to pursue an advanced school within a sister Service. In addition, NOPC must strive to increase its number of slots to Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force officers such that this small group of officers can increase its jointness.

The Department Head position for an officer is important to the Navy and is similar to the branch qualification of an Army major with its firm requirement for career advancement. Prior to or immediately after an officer's tour as Department Head he must be given the opportunity for joint assignments. This may be accomplished by exchange tours or perhaps as a JCS intern. In the aviation community it is prior to his tour as XO and CO (commander command) that joint must be pursued. After commander command, the timing for the officer may be better for his career but in most cases jointness may be more difficult to achieve.

Navy participation in exercises needs to be better synchronized for officers to fully understand their involvement in joint warfare. The exercises within the Navy have only a smattering of sister Service participation; this must be increased. As the research indicated prior, a Navy officer within the operational career level may be required to spend at least three deployments out at sea. This enhances his chances for participation in a joint operation, although his joint mindedness would be increased through short term joint exchanges with sister Services.

## **Air Force**

### **Operational Career Level**

*“The abilities of a leader, which are derived from innate capabilities and built from experience, education, and training, can be improved upon through deliberate development.”*

AFDD 1-1

### **Education**

As discussed earlier in this study there are three levels to the AF's Developmental (DE) process. Intermediate Developmental Education (IDE) is the DE for the AF officer at the operational career level. The process for an officer to be selected for IDE is quite simple. In the AF, a Captain submits an Officer Developmental Plan or ODP. On this ODP the officer indicates his preferences. For example he may specify Army Command and General Staff School, Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), Joint Advanced Warfighting School, or Naval War College. “The ODP will then be routed through the chain-of-command, to include their senior rater (if required), for endorsement. This input, along with the officer's record, will be the basis for the Development Team (DT) to provide their developmental education recommendation and forward to the AF DE Designation board.” The goal of this board is to select the right school for the right officer at the right time. The Air Force has achieved some success with their new system. In fact, “to highlight this effort, in academic year (AY) 00, 483 officers went to traditional ISS [Intermediate Service School]; for AY04, we are sending 768 officers to various IDE programs” (CSAF, 2002, 1-2). These numbers are considerably higher than previous years.

The Air Force officer selected to go to a sister Service school generally considers himself fortunate. It is at the twelve or thirteen year mark that an AF officer is enroute to IDE. This means that he has spent at least eleven or twelve of those doing AF related activities and

operations. His knowledge about the AF is moderately high and will have completed ACSC by correspondence. However, this officer is not granted JPME Phase I. He must complete school in residence to receive this credit. Therefore, most officers' tendency is to seek out a sister Service to attend to branch out and garner different perspectives.

### **Assignments**

The most likely staff assignment opportunity for a field grade officer is to a major command or MAJCOM. This means an AF Major may go to Pacific Air Forces Command (PACAF), Air Combat Command (ACC), United States Air Force Europe (USAFE), or Air Mobility Command (AMC). ACC is arguably the lead MAJCOM and is based at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. The reason why MAJCOMs get significant numbers is due to the slots available. Per Lt Col Anthony Shaw at ACC/DOYA, "ACC staff is currently manned at 63%. This gives us just enough people to do a lot of things good but not great. We are stretched thin with the tempo and the requirement for more officers at places like the Joint Staff and Combatant Commands" (Personal Interview, Lt Col Anthony C. Shaw, ACC/DOYA, 2004).

Other staff assignments include Combatant Commands, Air Staff, and as mentioned earlier Joint Staff. Out of the three just mentioned, the only billet that is not coded as joint per the JDAL is the job on the Air Staff. Air Staff provides officers a chance to work on acquisition, manning, or in places like Checkmate. This is not exclusive to the Air Force as each Service has similar staff assignments such as Army and Navy Staff.

The Joint Staff at the Pentagon is a good option for an AF officer to gain valuable joint experience working in one of the directorates. In the AF those who have spent time on the Joint Staff have "gained a broader perspective of what is required out of the Air Force as well as the other Services in peacetime and war. In some cases, it is grueling work due to the long hours

and requirements but overall it can be rewarding” (Personal Interview, Lt Col Kevin Mulvihill, 2005). While there are positions available for the Major at the Pentagon most are for Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels.

Operationally, the possibilities for an AF field grade operator are bountiful. After making Major and going to IDE they will normally have a follow-on staff tour and then return to operations. This officer will initially move into an Assistant Director of Operations (ADO) and then up to the position of Director of Operations (DO) typically once a position becomes available. The time someone spends as DO can vary based on the availability of squadron commander positions. Someone who returns to operations will generally know if they are competitive for a command because they will have met an O-5 commander’s board. Therefore, once someone has been selected for command, they will either take command where they are currently stationed or perhaps move to another unit to take command. Squadron command in the AF is important because it is a discriminator, identifying this officer as a future AF leader.

Squadron command in the AF is challenging and time consuming but perhaps one of the most rewarding experiences of an AF officer’s career. The AF squadron commander has many opportunities to guide his squadron towards success with such activities as joint and coalition exercises, live training, simulation training, and potentially an opportunity to lead his squadron to war. A squadron that does go to war can go in one of two ways, either tasked through a request for forces such was the case in OIF or if they are already part of a normal Air and Space Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotation. In the event of OIF, there were multiple squadrons required, thus squadrons from multiple AEFs participated. This affects tempo and timing of future AEF rotations, but one would be hard pressed to find a squadron DO or commander who would not relish the possibility of his squadron employing in combat.

At the operational career level, there are other positive operational field grade opportunities for the officer. Being assigned to a unit in Korea initially is received as bad news to the officer because it means an additional 12-months away from home and family in an already high tempo AF. This would be considered a short tour remote assignment for the officer. Nevertheless, stationed in the Republic of Korea can be an extremely rewarding assignment for the AF field grade officer for a few reasons. In Korea, there can be very few distractions since the main mission in life is to just work, whether it is in an operational unit or on a staff such as 7<sup>th</sup> AF. It gives pilots who are returning to the cockpit a chance to reorient themselves with the jet. Korea also provides other officers a chance to start or finish their master's degree program if they should choose to do so. Professional military education by correspondence can be accomplished as well. Lastly, since the assignment is in Korea, the opportunities to participate in joint and coalition exercises are excellent. There are monthly exercises which take place involving Korean, Marine, Navy, and Army assets. Overall, there is a perception an assignment to Korea may not be viewed as contributory to an officer's career, which is regrettable, because this type assignment increases joint mindedness.

### **Exercises and Operations**

As an AF officer progresses in rank to that of a field grade officer, his scope on such things as exercises changes. For example, in years earlier when an officer went to an exercise such as RED FLAG, MAPLE FLAG, JTFEX or Roving Sands they were performing a specific mission with little overall leadership opportunity. Now that this officer is in the field grade rank his scope of responsibilities is much greater.

A DO or CC of a squadron can guide their squadron towards these specific training events. This is important because squadron leadership can take advantage of joint exercises, and

as a result, expose the units to interoperability challenges that will prepare them for combat while increasing their joint mindedness. Exercises such as RED FLAG, Foal Eagle, Roving Sands, and JTFEX have excellent tactical and operational joint structures for AF officers to practice their skills.

The AF has an impressive capability to exercise without even leaving the ground in an aircraft. This capability is called Distributed Mission Training or DMT. “DMT is revolutionizing aerospace team training by implementing a 'train the way we fight' philosophy -- as a team. The DMT program provides a shared synthetic environment of geographically separated aircraft simulators and will link real time to C3I [Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence] assets and other battlefield systems in a synthetic battlefield environment. This will allow the Air Force to conduct mission rehearsal and combat mission training, which today can only be done to a limited extent because of constraints on flying hours, platform and airspace availability, as well as environmental constraints. The definitive purpose of the program is for DMT to be able to conduct full joint and combined forces mission rehearsals”

([http://www.dtic.mil/descriptivesum/Y2001/AirForce/0604227F.pdf#search='USAF%20DMT, 2001](http://www.dtic.mil/descriptivesum/Y2001/AirForce/0604227F.pdf#search='USAF%20DMT,2001)).

Officers at the operational career level have the ability to participate in DMT in a multitude of platforms, environments, and leadership positions. For example, while an AWACS, F-15s, F-16s, Joint STARS, and a Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) are linked together there can be several exercise training objectives being accomplished at once. A squadron commander can monitor his squadron's employment while they are flying to support time sensitive targeting (TST) missions in an Interdiction scenario. At the same time, a DO or



weapons officer can either fly in or monitor their platforms and systems in a Close Air Support (CAS) mission integrating certain Army elements. There is still work to be done on DMT for the AF but currently initiatives are being made to field a DMT capability for almost every aspect of AF operations. This is much needed because if the last six years on any indication of the future, joint operations are going to continue. DMT must be expanded beyond the Air Force to include the entire joint force. For example, air, land, and surface platforms and systems within all Services could greatly benefit from this realistic training environment. This training system is too valuable to solely include the Air Force.

The officers who are still in the operational career level would have been able to participate in OAF, OEF, and OIF. Each of these major operations provided the officer with different experiences and each one valuable to being successful as a joint leader. Several examples include a wide range of duties such as pilot, navigator, air battle manager, numbered Air Force air component planner, and liaison at the Combined Air Operations Center.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

The Air Force officer at the operational career level has increased opportunities to gain joint mindedness through various IDE programs. These opportunities must be sought out at every possible opportunity with JAWS and then sister Service schools providing the best venues for increasing joint mindedness. Equally, JPME Phase II must be required and accomplished prior to joint assignment for true joint mindedness. Granted, the system is changing to include Phase II JPME at the senior developmental education, but this does not help the officer going to a combatant command or the JCS as a major.

Following intermediate developmental education the officer must pursue a joint duty assignment. As mentioned previously in the research, combatant commands, Joint Staff, and

duty with NATO would provide the officer with joint acculturation. If a requirement exists for the officer to go remote, an assignment to Korea would serve best to increase his jointness. The potential for joint exercises in Korea are of extreme benefit to the officer.

As with the other Services the Air Force has participated and will continue to participate in joint operations. Joint operations such as OEF and OIF greatly increase an officer's joint mindedness but must be supplemented with joint exercises. RED FLAG is a high-quality venue but this too must be supplemented. The DMT program the Air Force has implemented must be adopted by all sister Services and propagated in the other Services. For example, the ability to practice joint scenarios, such as OIF, OEF, or similar operations, would increase the effectiveness of personnel who then go on to participate in live exercises and operations. These joint rehearsals obtained through a simulated environment such as DMT make possible joint mindedness.

**Marine Corps**  
**Operational Career Level**

**Education**

The educational probabilities for the Marine officer are parallel to that of his counterparts in the other Services. Once a Marine captain gets selected for Major he will subsequently find out if he is selected for Marine Corps Command and Staff.

The Marine CSC of today has evolved over its eighty year history. “The College educates its officers in the professional skills needed to function on the contemporary battlefield and with the knowledge necessary to place such operations within a larger security context” (<http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/csc/Histroy.htm>, 2005, 3). In any given year there are roughly 100 Marine Corps officers out of a student body of 190 students that attend CSC. Other Services such as the Army and Air Force are approximately “allocated 14 officers. The Navy is allocated a quota of 25 officers”. These numbers can vary as the “The President, Marine Corps University, can approve increases in allocations on a one-time basis. The Commandant of the Marine Corps must approve permanent changes to this allocation” (<http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/csc/ADMISSSIONS.htm>, 2005, 2). Students of resident Marine CSC also have the option to concurrently pursue a Master of Military Studies degree. Further, many Marine Officers complete CSC and JPME I through the College of Continuing Education (CCE).

The School of Advanced Warfighting or SAW, the Marine Corps version of an advanced military professional military education is available to highly qualified Marine majors. SAW “provides a follow-on, graduate-level professional military education for selected field grade officers who have completed the Marine Corps or sister service command and staff college

course. The course develops complex problem solving and decision making skills that can be used to improve the warfighting capabilities of an organization at the operational level of war” (<http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/csc/saw/index.htm>, 2005, 1. Those highly qualified officers who attend SAW will receive a Master of Operational Studies degree upon graduation. SAW attendance also makes the Marine officer more competitive within Corps.

### **Assignments**

The Marine major has several options. One opportunity that occurs for 46 majors is that of Marine Corps Recruiting Station Commander. This is an excellent assignment and one that is coveted by Marine officers looking to make the Marine Corps even better. They do so by seeking out the best possible recruits. While the Marine officer is commanding this recruiting station they are usually working on their professional military education by correspondence. CSC is a requirement for promotion to lieutenant colonel and not every major will have the opportunity to go in residence based on such things as timing and selection rates. Hence this is a perfect time to complete CSC if not previously completed in residence.

Marine officers in the operational career level can proceed to a high level staff billet at the twelve or thirteen year mark. For example, those Marine officers who graduated from SAW normally go on to MEF level billets. Other assignment opportunities for the Marine major include the Joint Staff. It is after this one tour either on a staff or in an operational billet that the Marine major then goes before his lieutenant colonel board.

Once a Marine has pinned on lieutenant colonel he is then screened for command. If this Marine is screened for command and subsequently selected it is the “highlight of one’s career” (Personal Interview, LtCol L. Harrelson, 2005). A Marine lieutenant colonel commander can take command of either an operational unit or a training unit. In both situations it is looked upon

as favorable. During his time as a battalion commander or squadron commander the Marine will more often than not find out if he is going to Marine War College. Since “the percentages of lieutenant colonels who go to school is less than the percentage of those who get selected, there is not guarantee just because you were an O-5 commander that you are guaranteed to go” (Personal Interview, LtCol Harrelson).

### **Exercises and Operations**

Exercises within the Marine Corps are distinctive because of the unique capability of a MAGTF. No where else in any armed service of any country in the world do you have a MAGTF-like capability. When asked if a Marine felt he was being shortchanged by not getting the opportunity to participate in major joint exercises, he responded by saying:

“Because we have literally every capability present in the MAGTF we have an understanding how these assets are supposed to fit and work together. We have air forces in the form of AV-8s, F/A-18s, and attack helicopters. We have an army in the form of our organic infantry and artillery. We have special ops in the form of our own Force Recon assets. We also have our own command and control structure. Not to mention we have our own ships and landing craft. So, if you were to ask me if I needed to participate in a joint exercise to understand how it all fit together? I would tell you that I have an understanding of what certain capabilities bring to the fight. I am ready to be a part of that joint force because I also understand what attack aviation brings, how to bring direct fires upon the enemy, and an understanding of how tactical and operational command and control. It is just that due to limited funding and operational tasking, we don’t get as much of an opportunity to display our unique capabilities while at the same time gain an

appreciation for what the other Services bring to the fight” (Personal Interview, LtCol L. Harrelson, 2005).

This is true, however, combined arms does not substitute for joint acculturation. Joint acculturation is needed to understand the differences between cultures, the terminology, and the overall tasks a sister Service accomplishes.

For a Marine artillery officer or infantryman those exercise opportunities are currently limited. In the past, Unified Endeavor included Marine participation. An officer who up to that point had spent 14 years in the Marines had an opportunity to participate as part of the MEF staff reflected, “Being on the staff provided me an excellent chance to open my aperture and see how the Marine Corps worked with the other Services. Up until that point I had a general understanding but Unified Endeavor allowed me to gain an appreciation” (LtCol L. Harrelson). Overall, officers who participate in Marine Corps specific exercises understand the capabilities and application of air power, land power, and amphibious operations. It is their participation in larger exercises that needs to be fixed and their understanding that combined arms does not substitute for joint acculturation.

Operational experience in combat is both thrilling and challenging for the officer. Marine field grade aviators who had the opportunity to participate in the onset of OIF normally found themselves right in the middle of the heavy action. Marine AV-8 Harriers along side their colleagues in single-seat and two-seat Hornets projected firepower in support of Marines on the ground. For some of these Marine aviators in the rank of O-4 and O-5, this was their first time in major combat operations. There is no doubt these Marines thrived at the opportunity to employ their trades in a joint combat initiative.

## **Assessment and Way Ahead**

A Marine officer can benefit in a similar capacity to those officers in his sister Service. If this Marine continues on to his advanced school SAW, he will more than likely be assigned to a MEF then return to the fleet. Consequently, an officer may not go joint until after battalion or squadron command. Post command is too late in one's career for him. Similarly, although command of recruiting station is an excellent leadership challenge, it lends little to joint mindedness. Therefore, Marines must greater exploit opportunities to pursue joint duty assignments.

Exercises with the Marines for the officer offer an opportunity to work with many capabilities the Marines possess. However this does not replace joint acculturation received through much larger joint exercises. That the Marines acquire extensive and valuable combat experience in real world operations is of course plainly true. Nevertheless, more joint exercises are both needed and important for preparing Marine officers, some of whom will be candidates for combatant command or joint staff billets to operate at peak performance. There is no such thing as an over-abundance of joint experience given the way our military fights today and will fight in the future.

## **Strategic Career Level**

*“Persuade by accomplishment rather than by eloquence.”*

General George C. Marshall speaking to General Eisenhower  
after Eisenhower’s arrival into the ETO.

At the strategic career level, the focus of military education is “strategy, theater campaign planning, the art and science of developing, integrating and applying the instruments of national power during peace and war.” The course of study at these schools should “emphasize analysis, foster critical examination... and provide a progressively broader educational experience. The institutions and courses covered in this area are “Air War College (AWC), Army War College, (USAWC), College of Naval Warfare at the Naval War College (CNW), Marine Corps War College (MCWAR). The Joint Senior JPME institutions covered within this area are the National War College (NWC), Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), Joint and Combined Warfighting School (JCWS) and Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) at JFSC. (JCS, 2004, A-A-5).

At the top tier of the strategic career level the focus of military education is on “joint matters and national security, interagency process, and multinational operations. (CJCSI, 2004, A-A-A-1). The general and flag officer institutions and courses within this top tier are CAPSTONE, Joint Flag Officer’s Warfighting (JFOWC), and PINNACLE. The CAPSTONE course, which is for newly selected one-stars, is located at Fort McNair. This course is an “intensive six-week course consisting of seminars, case studies, informal discussions, visits to key U.S. military commands with the continental U.S., and overseas trips to Europe, the Pacific, and the Western Hemisphere” The course came as a result of Goldwater-Nichols and “mandated that all newly selected general and flag officers attend CAPSTONE. The course objective is to



make these individuals more effective in planning and employing US forces in joint and combined operations” (<http://www.ndu.edu/CAPSTONE/index.cfm>, 2005, 1).

PINNACLE, as the senior course, “helps to prepare prospective joint/combined force commanders to lead joint and combined forces, building upon the progression of knowledge imparted first by Capstone and then by the Joint Flag Officer Warfighting Course [JFOWC].” This course would be necessary for the numbered Air Force commander who also serves as a Joint Forces Air Component Commander (JFACC). Pinnacle’s “overarching goal is to set conditions for future success in the joint, combined, and interagency arenas by utilizing advanced knowledge of operational art...” (<http://www.ndu.edu/CAPSTONE/index.cfm>, 2005, 2). CAPSTONE, JFWOC, and PINNACLE are all excellent courses which are certainly needed but provide jointness as a conclusion to one’s joint professional military education.

## **Army**

### **Strategic Career Level**

#### **Education**

For an Army Lieutenant Colonel (P) or Army Colonel, their senior service college (SSC) starts with a host of schools. These senior level schools “are at the apex of the military schools system and award Military Education Level (MEL) 1 credit” (HQ/USA, 1998, 17). MEL 1 credit is the highest academic credit that can be awarded to an Army officer. Within the confines of Army SLE are seven primary schools the Army officer has the opportunity to attend; Army War College (AWC) at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, National War College (NWC), Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), College of Naval Warfare, Air War College, the Inter-American Defense College (IADC), and the Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS).

Army War College “provides the senior level professional military education and leader development training” and has four primary goals it strives to achieve during this year long course. The first goal is to “prepare military, civilian, and international leaders to assume strategic leadership responsibilities in military or national security organizations”. The second objective is to “educate students about employment of the U.S. Army as part of a unified, joint, or multi-national force in support of the national military strategy.” The third objective “researches operational and strategic issues” while objective number four is to “conduct outreach programs that benefit the nation” (HQ/USA, 1998, 18).

These are not the only schools that the Army officer can receive senior level credit for as there are “other accredited international senior military service colleges, or any one of approximately 20 civilian and military fellowship programs” (HQ/USA, 1998, 17). As mentioned earlier senior Army officers will get their required Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Phase Instruction at the intermediate or senior level they attended. Upon completion of their senior level school Army officers will get their JPME Phase II accomplished at the Joint Forces Staff College.

The majority of officers attending NWC and ICAF can expect to have follow-on joint assignments. “By law, at least 50 percent of officers graduating from these schools must receive a joint assignment as either their first or second assignment after graduation” (HQ/USA, 1998, 18). The school not yet mentioned in DA PAM 600-3 is the Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS) which carries the same by law restrictions due to its joint nature status. JAWS would allow the officer to greatly increase his level of joint mindedness; however, it is far better for an officer to go earlier in his career.

## **Assignments**

Successful battalion command normally equals War College which improves an officer's opportunity for brigade command. After brigade command, if an officer has not been joint he needs to go to a joint duty assignment. This means at the twenty-two or twenty-five year mark an officer could potentially have fewer than ten years remaining in his career and has yet to have a joint assignment. This is entirely too late to gain the needed joint mindedness, and previously authorized waivers within the Army, much like the other Services, is no longer being considered. Therefore, the Service must now strive to get future brigade commanders joint experience prior to brigade but preferably battalion command. Other potential assignment for the strategic career level officer may include XO to a three or four star general officer. This would be joint if the officer was at a combatant command or on the joint staff.

A brigade commander may stay following his command to be Division Chief of Staff, but this keeps the officer Army centric and not joint. History has shown this position will lead to his selection as a general officer but not if this officer has not been joint staff officer qualified. This shows that an Army officer should preferably be assigned to a joint assignment prior to battalion command or brigade command. Serving in a billet later does not increase his joint mindedness.

## **Exercises and Operations**

The Army officer at the strategic career level can expect to participate in the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP). This program is "the Army's capstone combat training center is located at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. BCTP supports realistic, stressful training for...Corps, Division, and Brigade commanders and supports Army components participating in joint exercises." The Division Commanders who participate "normally execute a BCTP Warfighter Exercise (WFX) during the first year of command." (GlobalSecurity.org, Army

Warfighter, 2003, 1). Participation in BCTP is best if it augments an already established baseline of joint mindedness.

When designated, Corps level commanders can act as JTF commanders, but this does not equate to a joint billet. An example is the 18<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corps commander which served as the JTF-180 commander. During OIF, General McKiernan served as the JFLCC and then was replaced by Lieutenant General Mikolashek, and then Lieutenant General McNeil. By this point in an officer's career joint mindedness should be second nature to them. Still, the Services require a common systematic process that enables an officer to gain and maintain his core competencies while always increasing his joint mindedness.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

The Service requirements for the Army officer are demanding and normally lead to a very Army-centric path. This path can be detrimental to the joint mindedness needed to be a leader within the joint community.

The opportunities are there for the strategic career level Army officer to attend a sister Service school, National War College or even ICAF. However, if this is the only joint acculturation the officer has received up to this point in his career then it is too late. PINNACLE, CAPSTONE, JFOWC are excellent courses but these courses are too deep into an officer's career for them to have the joint impact needed to be a joint leader. Post brigade command is also too late to achieve joint mindedness. An officer needs to go to a joint duty assignment prior to brigade command and preferably prior to battalion command. Exercises such as BCTP are best utilized for increasing an already established joint mindedness. Likewise,

an officer must have joint mindedness prior to his time as a corps commander, JTF commander, or JFLCC.

## **Navy**

### **Strategic Career Level**

*“OIF, OEF, and GWOT demonstrated the enormous contributions Naval forces make to the effectiveness of joint and coalition forces. We expect some of the same challenges faced in OIF to recur and multiply in the coming years.”*

- RADM Cosgriff to house Armed Services Committee

## **Education**

As implied in the operational career level section of this study, Naval War College is the foundation for a Navy officer's professional military education. “For more than 100 years, the Naval War College has served as the premier center of strategic thought and national security policy innovation for our Navy” (<http://www.nwc.navy.mil/L1/missionstate.htm>, 2005, 1). The officers who ascend to this level in their careers are destined for success but may not have the level of joint mindedness needed as flag officers.

The College of Naval Warfare (CNW) “is a multidisciplinary program designed for U.S. Naval and Coast Guard officers in the grade of captain or commander, U.S. Marine Corps, Army, and Air Force officers in the grade of colonel or lieutenant colonel, and civilians of equivalent seniority from various Federal agencies.” Strategic level PME is the cornerstone of the CNW since the “program provides students with executive-level preparation for higher responsibilities as senior captains/colonels and flag/general officers.” Joint Military Operations course “focuses on the translation of contemporary national regional military strategies into naval, joint and multinational operations, with particular emphasis on operational art and

employment of sea services.” As could be expected, Naval War College is about educating tomorrow’s leaders and defining the next Navy.

Other strategic career level education opportunities exist that could provide a Navy O-6 with a joint perspective. Those Navy officers selected for senior leadership educational opportunities have opportunities to attend their sister Service senior level schools. A Navy officer could attend the College of Naval Warfare (CNW), Army War College, Air War College, National War College, Marine Corps War College, Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS), or the Industrial College of the Armed Force. For the Navy officer, the opportunities are small to attend the sister Service schools and typically reflect only a handful of students. The Navy O-5 who attends JAWS will probably come out with a much greater joint emphasis than his Service counterpart who attends another senior level school. Although, according to the JCS J-7, they have indicated that the CNW has less emphasis on service doctrine proportionally in the curriculum than do the other senior level Service schools.

The Navy will only send an officer to PME once in a career, not twice like the other Services do. Normally, if an officer attends intermediate PME he will not attend senior level PME and vice versa. The implications of this are severe. A Navy officer’s sister Service peers benefit significantly from this additional year by broadening their education and increasing their joint mindedness

### **Assignments**

It is following a Navy officer’s Commander Command where the officer has the most likely possibility of pursuing a JDA. This comes about the nineteen to twenty year point in an officer’s career. If an officer has not gone to a JDA up to this point, which is seldom, then they

are heading to a JDA billet. This is too late in one's careers for an officer to be rooted in joint mindedness.

Strategic level commands for the warfare Navy Captain, who is a SWO, submariner, or aviator, start with major command at sea. For the Naval aviator there are two command tracks a competitive Naval Captain can achieve. One of the command positions is commanding officer (CO) of an aircraft carrier and the other is as the CO of an aviation wing. Currently all but one of the carrier commands in the Navy is nuclear. The nuclear aspect of these positions creates an extensive training requirement thus reducing his opportunities to pursue joint duty.

Although these two COs carry similar credentials when it comes to FITREPs, there is a remarkable difference between being a CO of a CVN and CO of a CVW and that is the training required. A CVN/CO will have gone through literally years of training before assuming command. Nuclear training is very important and carries a tremendous responsibility and needs to be factored in for successful Navy officer who has the potential for major command sea in the future. On the other hand, the CO of CVW will spend roughly fifteen months as the Deputy CVW before fleeting up to CO of the CVW.

In the Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) community, the leadership assignment opportunities are as either an O-6 ship commander or as an O-6 squadron commander. The O-6 ship commander can fill one of two positions. The first is as a Cruiser commanding officer. His responsibilities may include that of the Air Warfare Commander for a Strike Group. Also, as an O-6 ship commander, a SWO could be an amphibious ship commander. In most cases the amphibious CO is a SWO, but he could also be an aviator who is looking for the needed experience of a deep draft ship. This needed experience benefits the aviator for his career within the Navy but also decreases his ability to be joint.

O-6 Squadron Command is the other command opportunity for the SWO. This command could be as the Destroyer Squadron Commander (DESRON) or Amphibious Squadron Commander (PHIBRON) CO. PHIBRON is one more position which in the past was filled by an aviator who needed experience in a deep draft ship. This would normally be done if the aviator is on a command track to the CO of a CVN or CV.

Further into the Strategic realm of Naval officer's career is the position called Commander Carrier Strike Group or CCSG. The CCSG could be either a SWO or aviator. The CSG position replaces the previous positions were commander Carrier Destroyer Group (COMCRUDESGRU). Further, an Expeditionary Strike Group can be headed by either a Navy or Marine one-star.

### **Exercises and Operations**

By the strategic career level a Naval officer could have been involved in literally dozens of exercises. In fact research that, "as a foundation to real-world operations, the U.S. Navy participates in over 40 joint naval and military exercises annually with members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, other foreign allies and friends, as well as U.S. military forces in the region" (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy Exercises, 2004, 1). As mentioned earlier, prior to departing for overseas and still as part of the spin up program, the strike group will participate in one final exercise, typically called the Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX). The roles of the strike group commander are much different than those of the younger officers. The officer who is "the deploying strike group commander is assigned TACON of all warfare areas, and falls under the OPCON of the numbered fleet commander, who operates as the Joint Task Force (JTF) commander" (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy JTFEX, 2004, 1).



The joint responsibilities for the Battle Group commander can include being the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC). For the numbered fleet commander who serves as the JTF commander, this is the ultimate challenge prior to the BG departing for its rotation. The emphasis of a JTFEX is that of a “ready-to-deploy certification for the Navy-Marine team” or a graduation exercise of sorts. (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy JTFEX, 2004, 1). As a result, the numbered fleet commander acting as the JTF commander will essentially be supervising the JFMCC along with all others within the BG.

The current challenge with JTFEX and ensuring that senior officers get the necessary exposure to joint training is the operations tempo. As an example, for JTFEX 98-1 “these exercises...included participation by more than 30,000 service members from all branches of the armed service.” Along with the brand new carrier USS JOHN C. STENNIS, there was participation from the XVII Airborne Corps. This exercise was a true joint training exercise and was followed later that same year by a Pacific version of a JTFEX called PAC JTFEX. This time “more than 16,000 Sailors, Marines, Airmen and reservists participated” (GlobalSecurity.org, Navy JTFEX, 2004, 3). With the current troop presence in Iraq of around 150,000 “U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) Commander, Army General John Abizaid, has reportedly requested about 20,000 troops for the sixth rotation of OEF 6” (Feickert, 2005, CRS-2). Because Army and Marine Corps personnel are committed in Iraq, the chances of something like JTFEX 98-1 happening anytime within the near future are unlikely.

When a SWO or aviator O-6 assumes seaborne responsibilities as Commanding Officer, the likelihood of him leading his ship in a joint operation are rather good. Post 11 September, Carrier Strike Groups USS Enterprise and USS Carl Vinson were in position to provide support to Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, which is part of the United States Central Command. Since

Afghanistan is landlocked and borders Pakistan to the south and east, Iran to the west, and the “Stans” to the north, the US Navy was the only viable option for the majority of the tactical air support. The closest US Air Force forward operating locations were in Oman, Al Udeid, Saudi Arabia, Diego Garcia, and Kuwait, which were all at least three hours travel time from the area of operations.

In March of 2003, the U.S. Navy was called upon again to provide all levels of support for operations in Iraq. On this occasion, the numbers of ships and carrier strike groups (CSG) more than doubled. With three CSGs in the Persian Gulf and two CSGs in the Mediterranean Sea, US Naval sea power was not only present in large numbers but a phenomenal force multiplier. Rear Admiral Kevin J. Cosgriff, U.S. Navy Director of Warfare Integration told the House Armed Services Committee that “your return on investment in the U.S. Navy included the lift for 94 percent of the nation’s joint and warfighting capability and more than 7000 Naval combat sorties in support of OIF” (US Congress, 2004, 1).

The person who provided the leadership for this force was the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander or JFMCC. This person is “the commander within a unified command, subordinate unified command, or joint task force responsible to the establishing commander for making recommendations on the proper employment of maritime forces and assets...or accomplishing operational missions as may be assigned” (Joint Publication 5-00.2, 1999, GL-10).

This then means that prior to and during operations of such magnitude such as OEF and OIF it is the JFMCC’s responsibility to effectively coordinate with other high-level positions such as the Joint Forces Land Component Commander (JFLCC), the Joint Forces Air Component Commander (JFACC) as well as the Joint Forces Commander who in most cases is

the Combatant Commander such as General Tommy Franks in OEF and OIF. A phenomenal level of responsibility is placed on one individual in a time of crisis. Consequently, joint operations integrated at the three-star level and not at all levels below would significantly hinder future joint warfare.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

The same education challenges that apply to the Army officer at the strategic career level apply to the Navy officer (same for Air Force and Marine). Sister Service school education is required at this point if they have not been joint up until now. Assignments in the leadership roles may require extensive amount of training eliminating their ability to gain further joint mindedness. By the time an officer reaches this point, there just needs to be fine tuning on their jointness. Strategic level operations in the Navy require someone who is skilled, trained, and joint by nature. Also, an officer with the proper training understands how to integrate and knows how to leverage all his resources to support joint exercises and operations.

## **Air Force**

### **Strategic Career Level**

*“As leaders move into the most complex and highest levels of the Air Force, or become involved in the strategic arena, the ability to conceptualize and integrate becomes increasingly important”.*

AFDD 1-1

Once AF officers are selected for Colonel and above they are managed by an organization within the AF called the Air Force Senior Leader Management Office (AFSLMO). This office “established in September 2001... recognizes the increasing demand for developing and sustaining a corps of transformational senior leaders who can shape the vision, mission, and ideas...” (<https://www.dp.hq.af.mil/afslmo/>, 2005, 1). This office also manages the senior civilian equivalents and chief master sergeants.

### **Education**

The education opportunities for the strategic career level AF officer are the same as the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps officer. The AF’s senior level school is Air War College located at Maxwell AFB, AL as part of Air University. Air War College “educates selected senior officers to lead at the strategic level in the employment of air and space forces. The curriculum focuses on coalition Warfighting and national security issues, with emphasis on the effective employment of aerospace forces in joint and combined combat operations” (<http://www.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp>, 2004, 2).

### **Assignments**

Wing Commander (O-6 and O-7), Warfare Center Commander (O-8), Numbered AF Commander (O-8), and Major Component (MAJCOM) Commander (O-10) are several opportunities the senior career level AF officers could experience. Each one of these

assignments poses unique challenges and rewarding opportunities. A study conducted by Colonel Mark McGuire on Senior Officers and Strategic Leader Development specifically addresses this. The author mentions “Operational assignments...were viewed as the most challenging experiences and hence as providing the best opportunity for altering a leader’s frame of reference. Therefore, the Services should continue to manage the progression of operational assignments as the most critical developmental experience” (McGuire, 2001, 94).

### **Exercises and Operations**

Participation in exercises provides a framework for the senior AF officer. This framework at the strategic career level is more complex, thus creating challenges. In fact, as AF “leaders move into the most complex, and highest levels...or become involved in the strategic arena, the ability to conceptualize and integrate becomes increasingly important (AFDD-1, 2004, vii). This conceptualization and integration is done both in exercises and operations. For the AF, the FLAG exercises are where senior leaders can participate or observe what the AF brings to the fight. The officer can serve as the JFACC or CFACC depending on whether there is coalition participation. RED FLAG is rooted in tactical execution; however, it is beneficial for the senior officer who is looking to gain an understanding and appreciation of the latest technological and operational advances. Exercises provide a good balance for the senior AF officer, specifically if they are en route to an operation such as OIF or OEF.

From 1991 to 2001 the predominant operations were Operations NORTHERN WATCH and SOUTHERN WATCH. Both ONW and OSW offered superb operation experience to the officer at the strategic career level. Positions at the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) such as J3, CAOC Director, and JFACC were held by AF officers in the rank of O-6 to O-8. Major General Buchanan, as the JFACC, was also the commander of Joint Task Force Southwest

Asia which had headquarters at Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia. Until OEF began in October 2001, ONW and OSW were the only AF combat operations in the south west Asia (SWA) theater of operations. Operations for OEF were executed from the same CAOC responsible for OSW thus providing a stable platform of operational experience for those senior AF officers.

Major combat operations for OIF began in March 2003. This was the largest air operation executed since Operation DESERT STORM. Lt Gen Moseley as the 9<sup>th</sup> AF Commander served as the CFACC and was integral in the success of air operations. In fact, “The Air Force had approximately 15 air wings operating in the region” (Bowman, 2004, 3). Much of the existing infrastructure had already been in place of years of operations in the region. AF senior officers may not be so fortunate in the future to have a robust existing infrastructure as was the case for OEF and OIF. Undoubtedly, this will be a major challenge for AF senior officers in an undeveloped theater, which will require a significant level of joint mindedness.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

There is a parallel theme to the Army and Navy senior officer. Joint PME at this point is considered necessary for the Air Force officer who has yet to be joint. However, the idea of sending O-6s to Joint PME for the first time is less than optimal. By this point in an officer’s career, he is already well rooted in his perceptions of joint mindedness. Following joint PME, a joint assignment would enhance his joint mindedness. Operational experience in the joint arena is essential for the Air Force officer particularly if he assumes larger roles such as a JTF commander or JFACC. Nonetheless, by this point in an Air Force officer’s career, the joint acculturation received is just a slight enhancement.

## **Marine Corps**

### **Strategic Career Level**

In the fall of 2000 the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General J.L. Jones issued the *Marine Corps Strategy 21*. He said, “The Marine Corps is ideally suited for joint, allied, and coalition warfare. With our experience in coordinating the multidimensional elements of our air-ground task forces...Marines instinctively understand the need for, and the logic and synergy behind, joint and multinational operations” (Jones, 2000, 7). This strategy which is almost five years old proved to be clairvoyant as the Marines advanced into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Again, as mentioned earlier in this research, combined arms are not one and the same with a firm understanding of jointness.

### **Education**

Marine strategic career level Education commences upon attendance at a SSC. For the Marine Corps, there is the Marine War College which is part of Marine Corps University, and has a mission similar to that of the Air War College, Army War College, and Navy War College. Outside of their own Service school, students also have the option to attend pursue NWC and ICAF. In general, Marine officers who attend Marine War College in general stay on as an instructor at Marine Corps Command and Staff College. This facilitates some of the best senior officers teaching younger field grade officers, but does not lend itself to the Marine officer increasing their joint mindedness. Therefore, it best that prior to this point in an officer’s career they seek additional joint educational opportunities.

## **Assignments**

Marine Corps colonels can be assigned to a variety of positions where some may include command opportunities. Prior to assuming his role as Commanding Officer of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS), Yuma, Colonel James J. Cooney, saw duty as the “Deputy Director for Current Operations and then as Vice Director for Operations at U.S. Southern Command”

(<http://www.yuma.usmc.mil/info/co.html>, 2005,2) Similarly, prior to Colonel Harmon Stockwell serving as Commanding Officer MCAS Beaufort, he served in Afghanistan as “Commanding Officer of Taskforce Panther, a joint coalition taskforce in support of OEF”

(<http://www.yuma.usmc.mil/info/co.html>, 2005, 2).

In 2005 the mold for commanding officers of Carrier Air Groups (CAG) was broken when a Marine Corps colonel assumed duties of Carrier Air Wing 9. It is normal for Marine Corps lieutenant colonels to command squadrons aboard carriers where Navy captains assume the role of CAP. However, “these roles are becoming more fluid as the Navy/Marine Corps Tactical Air Integration plan unfolds”

(<http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink/mcn2000.nsf/lookupstoryref/200322075318>, 2003, 1). It is breakthroughs like this that must permeate all Service “traditions” such that joint mindedness can broaden.

Other assignments for the senior Marine officer can include that of a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Commander which is a one-star position. Above the MEU commander is the Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) Commander who is a one-star or two-star. The MEB commander is also the deputy commander for the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) commander who is a two-star or three star. There are three other one-star positions that



exist for the Marine officer. They can serve as a Wing or Force Service Support Group commanders.

### **Exercises and Operations**

Each MEF, MEB, and MEU commander receives opportunities to participate in numerous exercises and operations with their units. The exercises are identical to the ones mentioned earlier in this research. Marine Corps officers at the strategic career level have been involved in every phase of combat operations from the fall of 2001 up until present day. Marine Corps units have rotated in and out of Afghanistan consistently. Likewise, I MEF was responsible for the right flank of V Corps as they raced to Baghdad. I MEF was led by Lieutenant General James Conway. During OIF he was described as “Big, bluff, well-read, and well educated, Jim Conway represented all that was best about the new United States Marine Corps...” (Murray, 2003, 65). Operationally speaking LtGen Conway was the right commander, at the right time, for the right operation. In the fall of 2004 the Marines took center stage when, “U.S. counterinsurgency offensives regained control of [Iraqi] cities...with the largest operation (12,000 US Marine and Army troops, with 2,500 Iraqi troops) occurring in Fallujah (Bowman, 2004, 5). Marine officers by this point in their careers are well rounded in their service competencies, but also must be entrenched in their understanding of joint warfare.

### **Assessment and Way Ahead**

Marine officers at the strategic career levels must be well rooted in joint mindedness much like their peers at the strategic career level. An officer who attends Joint PME with a follow on assignment to a joint billet would augment his joint mindedness. History has shown that operational experience in the joint arena is essential for the Marine officer but roles such as

JFLCC, JFMCC, and JFACC are given to the other Services. This does not preclude the Marine officer from being a JTF commander thus requiring an extensive understanding of jointness.

However, breakthroughs in Service parochialism have happened in the case of a Marine Corps colonel assuming a role as a CAG commanding officer. It is both the Marine Corps and the Navy that will benefit from this progress.

## **Conclusion**

The intent of this study was to show the Services do nothing substantial or systematic to instill joint mindedness into their officer corps. This research has shown joint qualification is merely a credential, implemented in the least enthusiastic manner. Joint in every sense of the word is not happening nearly as much as it needs to and more must be done to contribute to the joint mindedness of the officer. Service core competencies, Service promotion, and Service command requirements are noticeably important but are established and maintained at the expense of joint mindedness, and ultimately, the joint force. Therefore, jointness must be embedded within the cultures of all the Services and ought to be thought of in the same context as individual Service competencies.

Those officers who led forces in OEF and OIF performed well, but the Services cannot be dependent on pure coincidence for the general's and flag officers of the future. Joint mindedness must be infused at the lowest possible levels of an officer's career and reemphasized steadily throughout his time in service. This research has shown that education is changing to reflect joint ROTC units at select colleges across the nation. Right now, this is not enough as it only affects a very small population of future officers. As a result, it must proliferate to each and every academic institution such that these officer's are born into joint mindedness from the onset of their professional careers as an officer. Any other way will not lead to joint success in the future. Also, another example of where most must be done is the junior officer course Air and Space Basic Course (ASBC) at Maxwell AFB. ASBC and like courses in sister Services must be expanded to illustrate their Services role in joint force operations.

The results of this study indicate that "joint" exercises do not always signify the mandatory training to establish joint mindedness and prepare them for combat in a joint

environment. Consequently, wherever feasible and realistic each exercise must address how individual Services are going to integrate with their sister Services. This is especially important at the tactical and operational career levels where officers are typically performing tasks essential to their career field duties. They will then be able to observe first hand how their efforts impact the joint force and how this may translate in a combat environment. Services must strive for an exercise setting where face-to-face interaction is the standard practice. It is here that officers will be able to properly address each other and begin their understanding of each other's trade in order to establish a foundation for joint mindedness. It is prior to decisive combat operations that officers must fully comprehend the capabilities of the joint force. A possible solution to expensive exercises is as mentioned earlier in this research—Distributed Mission Training. Currently, the Air Force leads the way, but this capability if provided to other Services would increase the effectiveness of joint exercises and joint operations alike.

In addition, a joint tracking system for exercises and operations must be created that is a permanent part of an officer's record. This would ensure that the right officer is being selected for the right position when the opportunity presents itself in the future. It would also be a measure to ensure how many officers in each Service have participated in each joint exercise and joint operation, providing commanders at all levels with this valuable information.

Operations in the present and future demand officers have an expansive understanding of what their sister Service brings to the fight. Similarly, the staffs that develop detailed campaign plans must be thoroughly grounded in joint mindedness. The commander of a combatant command is only as effective as his staff; therefore, these officers must instinctively understand how the joint force is expected to employ. This understanding is something that must be developed thoroughly over time and revisited such that the officer is naturally joint minded.

Therefore, it is once an officer reaches the pinnacle of his career at the strategic level that his joint mindedness is perfected. This can not be the point where he is initially exposed to his sister Service. The responsibilities of the officer at this level are demanding and in most cases will not facilitate the time needed to become thoroughly indoctrinated to anything beyond his understanding of his own Service.

This research shows the current system is insufficient and that we can not just hope the future leaders of the military are prepared for this incredible task to lead the joint force. This is going to require Services to immediately place a much greater emphasis on joint leader development such that leaders inherently possess joint mindedness. In the future, the US military can not afford to be outmaneuvered by the enemy anywhere within the battlespace; freedom depends on it. Developing officers with joint mindedness must begin immediately.

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## Appendix A

### ***Survey on Successful Development of Future Joint Leaders***

I am conducting a survey to gather feedback from all four different service personnel in each of the JAWS seminars. This survey is completely voluntary and there is no requirement to participate. However, if you choose to do so, the following data will be used as research data for a thesis on *Successful Development of Future Joint Leaders*. Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me either in person, telephone, or via e-mail. If you should choose to participate, I thank you very much for your time, as I know it is rather limited.

NAME:

MOS/AFSC/Shred out:

Total Years of Service:

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#### **1. Education.**

a. What “technical” education have you received that was “joint” in some variation? I.e. If you are Army artillery/infantry/armor/aviation, did you attend a Marine Corps/Air Force school at some point for cross-training?

b. Besides JAWS have you attended any other “joint/coalition” PME? If so what was it and at what point?

c. If you could recommend one school (PME or technical) to a junior officer in your career field what would it be?

#### **2. Assignments.**

- Have you ever had a “joint” assignment either in a permanent or temporary capacity? If so, was the assignment beneficial to your progression as an officer?

#### **3. Exercises.**

a. What exercises have you participated that were truly “joint” in nature? Were they beneficial to you whatsoever?

b. What specific “joint” exercises would you recommend to a junior officer in your same career field?

#### **4. Operations. (Desert Shield/Storm, Counter Drug Ops, OAF, OEF, OIF, Bosnia, Unconventional)**

- When you participated in an operation was there any “joint” involvement? If “yes”, did you feel those experiences shaped your acuteness or awareness as a possible future leader in the joint arena?

## **Appendix A (Cont)**

### **5. Other.**

- If I were to classify a career administratively in three levels--tactical, operational, and strategic; what “attributes” would you label as being keys to success? Tactical: O-1 to O-4, Operational: O-4 to O-6, Strategic: O-6 to O-10?

-- Examples of attributes: Mental toughness, intellect, perseverance, adaptability, creativity, inspiration, etc, etc.

Tactical:

Operational:

Strategic: